DIALECTICA

EUROPE, BYZANTIUM, AND THE "INTELLECTUAL SILENCE" OF RUS' CULTURE

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INTRODUCTION

One of the least studied and most misunderstood areas of European history is the comparative impact the Western Church and the Eastern Church had on their respective cultures. This is especially the case with regard to Rus' culture. To a great extent, relatively naive ideas about the development of high culture (or lack thereof) in pre-modern Rus' predominate, even in scholarly thinking. It is more fashionable to condemn the Church than to try to understand its outlook. Among such ideas I would place the view that the Orthodox Church stifled the development of East Slavic intellectual thought.

This view has a long tradition among both scholars and historiosophists, and one more recent advocate has been the historian Francis Thomson. He published a number of exhaustively researched philological studies, but at times he engaged in speculation about the nature of Rus' culture that struck some scholars as questionable.[1] Thomson made the claim that the Orthodox Church prevented Rus' culture from fulfilling its "natural" development: "It was not the Mongols who were responsible for Russia's intellectual isolation … it was the Church."[2] In another article he wrote that it was "the Russian Church, mistakenly considering itself to be in possession of all the treasures of Orthodoxy," that "remained an obstacle to intellectual progress until its hold was broken by Peter the Great."[3] Such assessments of the Orthodox Church coincide with the

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[1] See, e.g., Andrzej Poppe, "How the Conversion of Rus' Was Understood in the Eleventh Century," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 11 (1987): 290n8, where he calls Thomson's conclusions "controversial"; and A[natoly] A. Alekseev, "Koe-chto o perevodakh v Drevnei Rusi (po povodu stat'i Fr. Dzh. Tomsona 'Made in Russia')," *Trudy Otdela drevnerusskoi literatury* 49 (1996): 287, where he declared that "Thomson … shows complete indifference to linguistic facts." Thomson catalogues these and other criticisms of his views in his "The Intellectual Silence of Early Russia: Some Introductory Remarks" (see note 59 below).
[2] Francis Thomson, "The Nature of the Reception of Christian Byzantine Culture in Russia in the Tenth to Thirteenth Centuries and Its Implications for Russian Culture," *Slavica Gandensia* 5 (1978): 120. Subsequently, twenty-one years later, he modified the wording of this claim but not its general import (see below).
[3] Francis Thomson, "Quotations of Patristic and Byzantine Works by Early Russian Authors as an Indication of the Cultural Level of Kievan Russia," *Slavica Gandensia* 10 (1983): 65.

views of Russian liberals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[4] As early as 1978, Thomson raised the question: "Where is the Russian Peter Abelard? Where is the intellectual ferment similar to that caused by Berengar's teaching on the eucharist in the eleventh century or Gilbert de la Porrée's on the Trinity in the 12th?"[5] Ten years later, he answered his own question by giving up the search: "It is pointless to look for a Russian Abelard."[6]

A variant of the question "Where is the Russian Peter Abelard?" was placed to me directly by Thomson in the form: "They didn't have a Plato, did they?"[7] Maybe not, but Eastern Christianity has as good a claim to having inherited Platonic thought as Western Christianity does. In a sense this question of to whom Plato belongs had already been answered by the English-born author Robert Payne (1911–1983):

> When the Alexandrians read Plato and his followers, they held up these theories to their own light; so did the Antiochenes; so did the Jews and Arabs, and much later the French, the Germans, the English and the Americans; and all saw in Plato something of themselves, refining the words to their own desires. There was something liquid in the Platonic theory; you could stain these waters whatever color you wished, but they remained Platonic. In the vast reaches of Plato's mind all things had been pondered, and it is not surprising that he should leave traces of himself on those who fed at the source.[8]

The problem, however, may be not so much that they did not have Plato but that they did not have Aristotle.

The Dutch-born Slavic linguist William Veder's assessment of Thomson is that he is "addressing the problem of Old Russian culture from a Western point of view and a Western set of values."[9] The problem that Veder is referring to, and that

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4 See, e.g., the comments critical of the Russian Church in Paul Miliukov, "The Religious Tradition" in his *Russia and Its Crisis* (New York: Collier, 1962), 60–104. In responding to a remark of Ihor Ševčenko that his work suffers from "an anti-Orthodox bias," Thomson, however, seemed to go further even than any of the Russian liberals when he suggested that the Rus' Church may not have been Orthodox. Francis Thomson, "I. Ševčenko as Byzantinist and Slavist," *Byzantion* 64 (1994): 500: "it [referring to his own article "Nature of the Reception"] certainly berates the early Russian church for theological silence and debased formalism—hardly surprising in the light of the fact that many of the most important patristic dogmatic works were never translated—but nowhere in that article (or in any other) has this reviewer *identified* the early Russian church with Orthodoxy" (italics added). Perhaps he meant to write that he does not consider the "early Russian church" *identical* with Orthodoxy.
5 Thomson, "Nature of the Reception," 120.
6 Francis Thomson, "The Implications of the Absence of Quotations of Untranslated Greek Works in Original Early Russian Literature, Together with a Critique of a Distorted Picture of Early Bulgarian Culture," *Slavica Gandensia* 15 (1988): 70.
7 In response to a question from the floor, Kennan Institute Conference, Washington, DC, May 26, 1988.
8 Robert Payne, *Holy Fire: The Story of the Fathers of the Eastern Church* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), 46.
9 William Veder, "Old Russia's 'Intellectual Silence' Reconsidered," in *Medieval Russian Culture*, vol. 2, ed. Michael S. Flier and Daniel Rowland (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 20.

Thomson is raising questions about, is what the Orthodox theologian and historian Georges Florovsky (1893–1979) called the "intellectual silence" of Rus' culture.[10] In 1962, Florovsky published a seminal article in the Discussion pages of *Slavic Review*, in which he raised the question "What was the reason for what can be described as its intellectual silence?"[11] It may be worthwhile to provide here in some detail Florovsky's argument and the immediate responses to it because it frames much of the discussion in the rest of this book.

Florovsky began with nineteenth-century Russian historiography, which he saw as providing "an established pattern of interpretation" whereby Russian history was chronologically divided into "the Old and the New, Ancient and Modern."[12] The divide was seen to have occurred at the time of Peter I (r. 1689–1725), which Florovsky called "the Reform." He saw this division as having been "first invented by the pioneers of the Reform in order to justify the break … and then it was maintained in its defense." According to Florovsky, the history of Rus' ("Old Russia"),[13] therefore,

> had to be presented in such a way as to show that the Reform was inevitable, necessary, and just. "The Old" meant in this connection the obsolete, sterile and stagnant, primitive and backward. And "the New" was depicted, by contrast, in the brightest colors as a great achievement and a glorious promise. The whole history of Old Russia, before Peter, was usually treated as a kind of prehistory—a dark background against which the whole splendor of the new cultural awakening could be spectacularly presented; or as a protracted period of infancy and immaturity, in which the normal growth of the nation was inhibited and arrested; or else as a lengthy preparation for that messianic age which had finally descended upon Russia.[14]

He went on to describe how in this view the proper "history" of Russia began only with Peter, which meant that Russia entered civilization "as a belated newcomer, sorely delayed in development, and thereby destined to tarry for a long time in the humble position of a learner, in the commonwealth of cultured nations."[15] One consequence of this tarrying, in Florovsky's view, was that the study of Rus' became "a field for antiquaries, not for historians."[16] He then tied in this pattern of interpretation of Russian history with the general schema that has been applied to European history:

> The whole history of European civilization was usually presented in this way—as a story of progressive emancipation of culture from the stiffening control of the established religion, or of the Church. This scheme of

10 Georges Florovsky, "The Problem of Old Russian Culture," *Slavic Review* 21 (1962): 12; and Georges Florovsky, "Reply," *Slavic Review* 21 (1962): 39.
11 Florovsky, "The Problem," 12.
12 Florovsky, "The Problem," 1.
13 I use the term "Rus'" instead of "Old Russia" that Florovsky used to avoid the nationalistic connotations of the term "Russia."
14 Florovsky, "The Problem," 1.
15 Florovsky, "The Problem," 2.
16 Florovsky, "The Problem," 3.

interpretation was derived partly from the philosophy of the enlightenment, partly from Positivism. It has been faithfully applied to Russian history also. By this criterion the whole history of Old Russia was summarily discredited in advance.[17]

Florovsky found that those who adopted this view were given to identifying the concept of "criticism" with the concept of "culture" and saw "[o]nly critical trends" as having "any cultural significance." As a result, they tended to see Rus' culture as "dominated by religion, enslaved in the dogmatic and ritual forms" and to value the Reform "as a deed of liberation from the control of religion."[18] This point is an incisive one, which I will return to later.

Florovsky asserted that it was a time when the history of Rus' "must be carefully revised and probably rewritten … as a history in its own right, and not just as a preamble to" the post-Petrine period of Russian history.[19] In order to begin the process of revision and probable rewriting, Florovsky cited a suggestion that the Austrian and Russian Slavic philologist Vatroslav Jagić (1838–1923) made in 1867 that tenth-century "Slavic civilization might have developed as a third cultural power, competing with the Latin and the Greek."[20] If Slavic civilization, then centred in Bulgaria, was in the position that Jagić thought it was at that time, then one has to ask why it did not develop into "a third cultural power." Florovsky likewise asked why eleventh- and twelfth-century Rus', which "was not isolated from the rest of the Slavic world as it was not separated from Byzantium and the West, or from the East" and where "[t]he ground was already prepared," did not take up "the cultural challenge."[21]

Florovsky pointed out that scholars since then have tried to answer that question and have come up with varying answers. Some scholars have focused on the nature of the Byzantine cultural inheritance. The historian of the Russian Orthodox Church Evgenii E. Golubinskii (1834–1912) asserted that Rus' did not effectively adopt Byzantine culture and that the effort of King Volodimir I of Kiev (r. 982–1015) to bring in enlightenment failed: "almost immediately after its introduction it disappeared without leaving any trace."[22] Golubinskii's views, thus, could be seen to coincide with nineteenth-century historiography that Rus' before the Reform was "obsolete, sterile and stagnant, primitive and backward."

Another answer was provided by the Russian religious philosopher and historian George P. Fedotov (1886–1951), who argued that it was not the inability to adopt Byzantine culture that provided the obstacle to the development of Rus' philosophical inquiry, but the adoption of the Byzantine practice of allowing

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17 Florovsky, "The Problem," 4.

18 Florovsky, "The Problem," 4.

19 Florovsky, "The Problem," 5.

20 Florovsky, "The Problem," 7. Jagić made the suggestion in his *Historija Književnosti naroda Hrvatskoga i Srbskoga*, vol. 1: *Staro doba* (Zagreb: D. Albrecht, 1867), 52, 66.

21 Florovsky, "The Problem," 7.

22 E[vgenii] E[vstigneevich] Golubinskii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi*, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (Moscow: Imperatorskoe Obshchestvo istorii i drevnostei Rossiiskikh, 1901–1911), 1.1:701.

devotion and writing in the local indigenous language rather than Greek. In contrast to the Western Church, which required learning and worship to be in Latin, giving Europeans access to classical learning, the Rus' had Greek texts translated for them (mostly in Bulgaria and mostly religious texts). Thus, the Rus' had no incentive to learn Greek, and thereby gain access to all of ancient Greek literature and philosophy.[23] Fedotov noted in a passage that is particularly relevant for the theme of the present book: "In poor and dirty Paris of the twelfth century, [amid] the thunder of the battles of the Scholastics, the university was born, [while] in 'Golden Kiev', situated among the mosaics of its temples, nothing except the labor of the Caves monks writing chronicles and patericons."[24]

Florovsky acknowledged that "Fedotov's imaginary picture is pathetic," but questioned whether "his argument [is] fair and sound."[25] A few pages later he raised what he found to be "[t]he most disquieting question" in regard to the study of Rus' history, namely: "What was the reason for … its intellectual silence?"[26] Although the Rus' kingdoms had "great art" as well as "an intensive creative activity in the political and social field, … nothing original and outstanding has been produced in the realm of ideas, theological or secular." For those who began with the premise that Rus' was "backward and primitive," the answer to the question was easy. While Florovsky admitted that "one may be tempted by easy answers," he warned that "[a]ll easy formulas are but evasions."[27]

Rejecting the resort to characterizing the "Russian soul" in order to try to answer the question, Florovsky instead followed up on the nature of the Byzantine inheritance, but he took a different path from that of Golubinskii and Fedotov. He tried to rephrase their respective accusations into seeing the Rus' as being overwhelmed by the "enormous richness of cultural material" offered by Byzantium to the extent that it "simply could not be absorbed at once."[28] In contrast to Golubinskii, who thought Rus' had rejected the enlightenment of Byzantium, Florovsky argued that "[t]he crisis consisted in that the Byzantine achievement had been accepted, but Byzantine inquisitiveness had not." He contended that Rus' "seems to have been charmed by the perfection, completeness, and harmony of Byzantine civilization, and paralyzed by this charm."[29] He concluded by pointing to the "perennial achievements in the inventory" of Rus' culture—the "greatness" of its "religious art," the "vigor and freshness and the profundity of … [its] religious quest, … [as well as the] profound

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23 Thomson subsequently echoed Fedotov's argument when he identified as the cause of Rus' culture's intellectual silence "the fact that a lack of a knowledge of Greek prevented direct access to the treasures of Byzantine thought and the limited range of translated material provided little intellectual stimulus." Thomson, "The Implications of the Absence," 68–69.
24 G. P. Fedotov, "Tragediia intelligentsii" (1927), in *Novyi grad: Sbornik statei* (New York: Chekhov Publishing House, 1952), 20.
25 Florovsky, "The Problem," 9.
26 Florovsky, "The Problem," 12.
27 Florovsky, "The Problem," 12.
28 Florovsky, "The Problem," 13.
29 Florovsky, "The Problem," 14.

human values in this old culture, as detached, as archaic, as exotic as it may appear to those trained in the Western ways." In this sense, Florovsky found that Rus' culture "did, from its very inception, belong to the wider circle—to the circle of that civilization which had been built, on the composite basis of ancient classical culture, under the creative impact, and often under direct guidance and deep inspiration, of Christian faith and mission."[30]

Upon finishing Florovsky's article, one has the feeling that searching questions have been raised, but amidst the profound insights and soaring rhetoric, one is hard pressed to find a solid answer to the difficult question, "What was the reason for ... its intellectual silence?" Since Florovsky's article was part of the "Discussion" section of *Slavic Review*, it received responses from two other scholars. Nikolay Andreyev discussed paganism in Rus',[31] which is not relevant to our discussion, and addressed the question of "intellectual silence" directly only by asserting that "Russia" was not backward; instead, "as a mere province of the Mongol empire, the country had been cut off from Western Europe since the thirteenth century."[32] Towards the end of the article, Andreyev did refer to "intellectual philosophizing" by fifteenth-century Rus' icon painters: "some compositions were so complex that they required an explanatory commentary and caused considerable intellectual fermentation."[33] He saw these innovations as opening "a new chapter not only in the history of Russian religious art but also in the history of thought in Muscovite Russia, in which a new and more speculative frame of mind struggles for expression in the new compositions and techniques."[34]

Florovsky's student, the historian James Billington (1929–), on the other hand, placed the question of intellectual silence in the context of three other "major tasks": "(1) distinguishing different periods and regions within pre-Petrine Russian culture, (2) accounting for its 'intellectual silence,' (3) analyzing its inner structure, and (4) appraising separately its historical fate and its intrinsic worth."[35] He drew a distinction between "Kievan Russia" and "Muscovy" and then focused most of his attention on Muscovy. In regard to the presumed "intellectual silence" of Muscovy, Billington cited three external factors: (1) "the harsh frontier conditions"; (2) "the decisiveness and brutality of the Muscovite subjugation of ... the politically sophisticated culture of westward-looking Novgorod and Pskov"; and (3) "general lack of a classical heritage" since "[a]ll of Kievan as well as Muscovite Russia lay well beyond the political borders (if not the economic orbit) of the Hellenistic and Roman empires."[36] Billington asserted that, in part due to this absence of classical

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30 Florovsky, "The Problem," 15.

31 Nikolay Andreyev, "Pagan and Christian Elements in Old Russia," *Slavic Review* 21, (1962): 16–23.

32 Andreyev, "Pagan and Christian Elements," 21.

33 Andreyev, "Pagan and Christian Elements," 22.

34 Andreyev, "Pagan and Christian Elements," 22.

35 James Billington, "Images of Muscovy," *Slavic Review* 21 (1962): 24.

36 Billington, "Images of Muscovy," 27–28.

heritage, Rus' "never acquired (at least until the seventeenth century) a clear diocesan structure and episcopal order for its church, any uniformly recognized body of canon law, or any clear distinction between law and morality in the civil sphere."[37] In a footnote, Billington acknowledged that "hierarchical authority and precedence had been established earlier and canon law extensively used in both the ecclesiastical and civil spheres" but insisted that "there was considerable confusion and local variation" before the early seventeenth century.[38] Billington also pointed to the impact of the two South Slavic influences on Rus'. The first wave of that influence (in the tenth and eleventh centuries) brought "the almost fundamentalist attachment to inherited forms and formulas and the bias toward an aesthetic rather than a philosophic culture." The second wave (in the fourteenth century) introduced "a more specifically antirationalist bias, bearing the decisive imprint of the antischolastic hesychast mysticism of fourteenth-century Byzantium."[39]

Florovsky responded to the discussants' comments. He graciously acknowledged Andreyev's remarks and stated that paganism in Rus' did help to lay the groundwork for accepting Byzantine culture.[40] He ignored Andreyev's claim that Rus' was isolated "from Western Europe" by the Mongols. Florovsky's reply to Billington's comments was more pointed in that he disputed the cultural divide between "Kievan Russia" and "Muscovy" that Billington depicted: "Kievan inheritance was an integral part of the Muscovite cultural tradition."[41] He also objected to Billington's seeming to imply that he (Florovsky) was "inclined to diminish the historical importance of Old Russian culture," and wanted to clarify that he was "responsive to the thrill of Old Russian religious culture in its manifold branches" and that his "personal estimate of it is on the whole appreciative, positive, and rather high."[42] It was instead its significance that he was questioning: "We may highly cherish the legacy of Old Russian culture, and yet as historians we must take seriously the fact of its *historic 'unsuccess,'* of its internal crisis, of its tragic dissolution and collapse."[43]

Instead of looking for the solution to the riddle of Rus' intellectual silence in "external factors" as Billington does, Florovsky says he "would look for it in the inner structure of the Muscovite spiritual world."[44] He dismissed Billington's "harsh frontier conditions" argument on the basis that those conditions "did not prevent or impede the flowering of art." He chided Billington for being "hardly historically fair to idealize the constitution and policy of" Novgorod and Pskov. Furthermore, those two cities had been annexed by Moscow and "little if anything has been lost of the Novgorod cultural heritage."[45] The diocesan structure that Billington referred

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37 Billington, "Images of Muscovy," 28.
38 Billington, "Images of Muscovy," 28n12.
39 Billington, "Images of Muscovy," 29.
40 Florovsky, "Reply," 37.
41 Florovsky, "Reply," 35.
42 Florovsky, "Reply," 37.
43 Florovsky, "Reply," 39 [italics in the original].
44 Florovsky, "Reply," 40.
45 Florovsky, "Reply," 40.

to, Florovsky considered to be a symptom rather than a factor. He also thought it unfair "to overstress the anti-intellectual bias of the Hesychast movement, which stood rather in the mainstream of the Greek intellectual tradition."[46] He closed his "Reply" with the call for further research of the sources: "What we actually need most urgently is not a general discussion of certain basic topics, but rather a patient study of sources, critically evaluated and impartially assessed."[47]

The main points of disagreement between Florovsky and Billington involve the relationship of Muscovy to the early Rus' principalities and the external factors that contributed to what they see as Muscovy's intellectual silence. Although there was, as Florovsky pointed out, solid cultural continuity between the early Rus' principalities of the late tenth through thirteenth centuries, there was also a political discontinuity. The early Rus' principalities were decentralized, and the ruler in Kiev received allegiance from other Rus' rulers intermittently. Much of the time the ruler in Kiev held sway over only three jurisdictions—those of Kiev, Chernigov, and Pereiaslavl'.[48] Florovsky, in my view, convincingly dismissed the external factors that Billington claimed limited Muscovy's intellectual development. The Hesychast impact is one that I discuss in some detail later in this book.

A point that Florovsky and Billington seem to be agreed upon is that Muscovite Rus' was part of the intellectual silence; they merely disputed over the reasons why. Yet, since 1962, a substantial amount of work has been done on Muscovite intellectual thought. It has reached a point where 54 years later a book stated that one of its "key aims is to highlight the astonishing variety of Russian religious, political, and social thought in this era [the late fifteenth to eighteenth centuries]."[49] Researchers are less likely to call Muscovite Rus' intellectually silent although they might still argue about how comparatively intellectually articulate it was.

In 1963, Dmitrii S. Likhachev (1906–1999), Corresponding Member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and professor at Leningrad University, wrote an impassioned response to the "Problem of Old Russia" forum. Like Florovsky, Likhachev saw no cultural rift between early Rus' and Muscovy and considered any claims that they were distinct to be "unjustified."[50] He emphasized the role that icon painting and architecture played in Rus' culture and argued that, although these are "silent" arts in that "[t]hey spoke the voiceless language of color and line, … they were in consequence no less intellectual." For him, criticism of Rus' literature for not having a Dante or a Shakespeare is inappropriate, for those two literary giants "cannot

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46 Florovsky, "Reply," 40.

47 Florovsky, "Reply," 42.

48 Donald Ostrowski, "Systems of Succession in Rus' and Steppe Societies," *Ruthenica* 11 (2012): 30–34.

49 Gary M. Hamburg, *Russia's Path toward Enlightenment: Faith, Politics, and Reason, 1500–1801* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 1. Hamburg faulted the treatment of Muscovy in Billington's *The Icon and the Axe* as dealing with "less the intellectual than the psychological dimension of Russian contact with the West: in his [Billington's] telling Muscovite fear, 'fanaticism,' and 'radicalism' confronted the 'urbane' and 'worldly' West" (Hamburg, *Russia's Path toward Enlightenment*, 4–5).

50 D. S. Likhachev, "Further Remarks on the Problem of Old Russian Culture," *Slavic Review* 22, (March 1963): 115.

serve as measures for the literature of Old Rus'."[51] Its literature was that "of a folkloristic type, and not at all of a personal sort." He used the metaphor of an embroiderer: "We cannot demand of an embroideress of the people that she with her threads should create a picture that would raise her name to the level of that of the genius Rembrandt."[52] What he calls "historical argumentation" is what prevailed in Rus' "diplomacy, publicistics, the deciding of juridical disputes, and so forth."[53] Likhachev concluded that Rus' culture may have engaged in silent arts, but that does not mean they were silent intellectually: "its world view was clothed in the form of art and not in the form of scientific treatises."[54] Everything Likhachev stated in his response about Rus' art, architecture, and literature may be so, but it merely begs the question. Western medieval Europe similarly had art, architecture, and literature of the folkloristic, non-personal type. The question is: why did it also have philosophical and theological inquiry but Rus' did not?

In 1994, some 32 years after Florovsky wrote his article, Veder returned to the issue of the "intellectual silence" of Rus' culture. The starting point for his essay was a statement that Florovsky made recommending more research before a synthesis was attempted.[55] Referring to Thomson as "one of Andreyev's last disciples" and as one who undertook that detailed research of the sources that Florovsky recommended, Veder demurred that the conclusions Thomson reached met all of Florovsky's criteria. "Although Thomson's studies certainly meet Florovsky's recommendations of patient study of sources and critical evaluation," Veder found them "not unequivocally acceptable" in terms of "Florovsky's recommendation of impartial assessment or his call for separate investigation of culture as a system of values and as a function of society."[56]

According to Veder, before comparison of a particular culture with another culture is made, there should be "the prior dispassionate description of its system in its own right." Otherwise, "many more pertinent observations and generalizations than comparison can provide are bound to be missed."[57] I must admit that I do not agree with Veder's suggestion of the putting off of comparisons between cultures until a "prior dispassionate description of its system in its own right" could take place. Who is to say when that milestone has been reached? Have there not already been dispassionate descriptions of Rus' culture? And if not, why not? It seems to me that analysis of a culture can take place simultaneously with its comparison with other cultures, for such a comparison can raise questions that one might not otherwise think of asking one's sources. Besides, I could not otherwise write this book.

Veder then went into a discussion of two types of "books" in medieval Slavia Orthodoxa—"liturgical or the official ecclesiastical functions" and *reading*

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51 Likhachev, "Further Remarks," 118.
52 Likhachev, "Further Remarks," 118.
53 Likhachev, "Further Remarks," 119.
54 Likhachev, "Further Remarks," 120.
55 Veder, "Old Russia's 'Intellectual Silence' Reconsidered," 19.
56 Veder, "Old Russia's 'Intellectual Silence' Reconsidered," 20.
57 Veder, "Old Russia's 'Intellectual Silence' Reconsidered," 20.

compilations (*Chetii sborniki*). In neither is there "textual coherence," which Veder posited is an intentional characteristic: "Disintegration of source structures and lack of textual coherence in the resulting compilation are phenomena so frequent and widespread in Slavia Orthodoxa, both geographically and chronologically, that they cannot be considered accidental."[58] That may well be, but as Florovsky objected to Billington, and Veder objected to Thomson, so the reader may well object to Veder, that the phenomenon he describes may be more symptom than cause of what is taken to be the intellectual silence of Rus' culture.

In 1999, on the occasion of a Variorum reprint of a number of his articles, Thomson wrote a preface that addressed the issue of intellectual silence and the criticisms his remarks had received in the meantime. He defended his claim that the corpus of translated literature in early Rus' was comparable to the contents of a large provincial Byzantine monastic library by pointing to the catalogue made in the year 1201 of the library of the Monastery of St. John the Theologian on Patmos.[59] He declared that in his previous articles he had not intended to criticize the Rus' Church "as a hierarchical body and state institution." Thomson acknowledged that the reception of Byzantine culture in early Rus' needs to take "aspects such as art and music into account," and he then drew a possibly significant distinction: "the issue is only that of intellectual, not artistic still less cultural silence."[60] Florovsky had posed "intellectual silence" as the "problem of Old Russian culture," yet Thomson seemed to be saying that he understood "intellectual silence" and "cultural silence" as two different categories of silence. This formulation contrasts with that of Likhachev, who had asserted that although Rus' culture was "silent" it was still intellectual.

Thomson rejected the criticism of the Byzantinist and Slavist Ihor Ševčenko (1922–2009) that his (Thomson's) "valuable statements suffer from an anti-Orthodox bias."[61] Instead, he protested that he was only making "a deduction from the facts established." He did, however, reformulate his conclusion to make it "more precise": "it was the fact that the form of the Christian faith as received in early Russia lacked much if not most of its intellectual content, which led to an overemphasis upon its ritual observance, which in turn inevitably led to obscurantism."[62] In Rus', according to him, they did not assimilate "the dogmatic–philosophical element of the Christian faith," and that element "is incomprehensible without a grasp of classical philosophy." Thomson concluded, therefore, that "there was simply the lack of

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58 Veder, "Old Russia's 'Intellectual Silence' Reconsidered," 26.

59 Francis Thomson, "The Intellectual Silence of Early Russia: Some Introductory Remarks," in *The Reception of Byzantine Culture in Mediaeval Russia* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), xi/3. He had previously made the comparison with this particular monastic library in his "Nature of the Reception," 117 and 137n145.

60 Thomson, "The Intellectual Silence of Early Russia," xi/3n13.

61 Ihor Ševčenko, "Remarks on the Diffusion of Byzantine Scientific and Pseudo-Scientific Literature among the Orthodox Slavs," *Slavonic and East European Review* 59 (1981): 322n2; art. rpt. in Ihor Ševčenko, *Byzantium and the Slavs: In Letters and Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute/Naples, Istituto Universitario orientale, 1991), 585–615.

62 Thomson, "The Intellectual Silence of Early Russia," xvii/9.

any stimulus to philosophical enquiry."[63] This pronouncement of Thomson's is closer to Florovsky's claim that Rus' failed to adopt the intellectual curiosity of Byzantium. But neither assertion gets us any closer to answering the question why it did not.

In 2001, the British cultural historian Simon Franklin (1953–) wrote a review essay in Russian about the Variorum collection of Thomson's articles. In the essay, the translation of the title of which is "On the Cause of the 'Intellectual Silence' of Old Rus'," Franklin focused primarily on Thomson's conclusions in regard to that silence.[64] He critiqued three aspects of those conclusions: the manner of Thomson's presentation, the evidence for his conclusions, and what Thomson considered the reasons for that silence.

After remarking on Thomson's manner of rhetorical expression, which "seems to be intended to deliberately provoke outrage," and his "didactic manner," which is characterized by "an exasperatingly picky instructiveness," Franklin focused on Thomson's basic thesis, which "reflects an assessment by a person who knows what should be the true faith, but certainly does not reflect objective impartiality."[65] Franklin pointed out that there is a difference of opinion among experts about the evidence Thomson cites for his generalizations. For example, "of the 70 translations [of texts], the provenance of which this or another scholar connected with Kievan Rus', Thomson does not recognize a single one."[66] The point is that Thomson claimed none of the early Rus' inhabitants (with the possible exception of Metropolitan Hilarion) knew Greek, and therefore Rus' was cut off from the body of ancient Greek thought. If translations were being made from the Greek in Kiev, then that would undermine Thomson's claim. Nevertheless, none of those translations that various scholars have at one time or another ascribed to Kiev are of writings by ancient Greek philosophers, political theorists, or playwrights.

Franklin emphasized how categorical Thomson has been in denying any semblance of intellectuality in early Rus'. Franklin admitted that "strictly speaking" Thomson is "correct" that none of the translations from the Greek can be conclusively shown to have been made in Kiev. Thomson, however, is also "incorrect" because it is in the nature of the field that the "criteria for 'the localization' of Slavic translations is almost always conditional, almost always to a greater or lesser degree arguable, hypothetical, provisional."[67] As Franklin noted, Thomson acknowledged that Metropolitan Hilarion (r. 1051–1055) turned to Greek sources for his *Slovo o zakone i blagodati* (*Sermon on Law and Grace*): "In other words, even Francis Thomson does not propose that a certain solid wall (глухая стена) was constructed around Kiev and all of its inhabitants that blocked all from any direct contact with the written

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63 Thomson, "The Intellectual Silence of Early Russia," xxii/14.

64 Simon Franklin, "Po povodu 'intellektual'nogo molchaniia' Drevnei Rusi," *Russia mediaevalis* 10, (2001): 262–70.

65 Franklin, "Po povodu 'intellektual'nogo molchaniia,' " 265.

66 Franklin, "Po povodu 'intellektual'nogo molchaniia,' " 263. Cf. Francis Thomson, " 'Made in Russia': A Survey of the Translations Allegedly Made in Kievan Russia," in *Millennium Russiae Christianae: Tausend Jahre Christliches Russland 988–1988. Vorträge des Symposiums anlässlich der Tausendjahrfeier der Christianisierung Russlands (Münster 5.–9. Juni 1988)*, ed. Gerhard Birkfellner (Cologne: Böhlau, 1993), 295–354.

67 Franklin, "Po povodu 'intellektual'nogo molchaniia,' " 266.

culture of Byzantium."[68] This point is an important one because Franklin, like Veder, was opening to question how intellectually silent early Rus' actually was.

Franklin found Thomson's "explanation" that the Rus'ians had no "comprehension of ancient philosophy" to be not an explanation but a "tautology": "they were not engaged with philosophy because they were not engaged with philosophy; they were silent because they did not speak; the culture was such because it was not something else."[69] He agreed with Thomson that Rus' intellectual thought was limited by the nature of the translated texts, mostly liturgical works, but he disagreed that this was a fault of the local use of Church Slavonic. After all, Franklin argued, we would not say that "medieval Arabic culture should ('inevitably') develop in isolation because they used the Arabic language."[70] Thus, Franklin rejected Thomson's "explanation" that there was "inevitability" about it: "Such a mechanistic interpretation of cause–effect connections in the history of culture is clearly unsatisfactory." Instead, he pointed to the Byzantine system of higher education, which allowed educated Byzantines to be engaged with what they were engaged in, and he asked "why did the Byzantines have such ideas about education?"[71]

Franklin concluded his critique of Thomson's explanation for the intellectual silence of Rus' culture with a rejection of that explanation's limitations: "it is necessary to take into account broader cultural factors than only those that fit into Thomson's narrow textual schema."[72] To be sure, as Franklin warned, "one cannot propose that closer contact with Byzantine education would have served as the 'stimulus to philosophical inquiry'" just as one "cannot assert that even in the absence of immediate contacts the Eastern Slavs would not have become curious."[73] In other words, "contacts are able to seek, develop, reinforce," but even in the presence of contacts with another culture, a society may choose not to follow up on them.

To sum up, the scholarly perception has been that medieval European culture was intellectually articulate; Rus' culture seems not to have been, or at least significantly less so. Thomson's questions certainly carry the implication that Rus' culture was, thereby, inferior to that of Western Europe. But was it? Could there have been something else going on in the Byzantine–Rus' connection that caused it to pursue a different, parallel path? Or do all cultures follow the same path of development, only some are further along and others less far along that path? Have we, as scholarly investigators living in the post-Enlightenment secular age, developed an identification of the concept "criticism" with the concept "culture," as Florovsky described it? Do we tend to see "[o]nly critical trends" as having "any cultural significance"? The spirit of Florovsky's posing the question of the problem of Rus' culture and of Franklin's pointing the way to a possible answering of it through a broader comparative cultural investigation is what underlies the present study.

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68 Franklin, "Po povodu 'intellektual'nogo molchaniia,'" 267.
69 Franklin, "Po povodu 'intellektual'nogo molchaniia,'" 267.
70 Franklin, "Po povodu 'intellektual'nogo molchaniia,'" 268.
71 Franklin, "Po povodu 'intellektual'nogo molchaniia,'" 268.
72 Franklin, "Po povodu 'intellektual'nogo molchaniia,'" 269.
73 Franklin, "Po povodu 'intellektual'nogo molchaniia,'" 269.

I

AESTHETIC JUDGMENT

Sixty-six years ago, the art historian P. A. Michelis (1903–1969), in writing about the approaches to art, asserted that "our entire aesthetic education" rests on Renaissance conceptions of classical norms. Furthermore, according to Michelis, since the time of the Renaissance, "a narrow humanistic education with a one-sided aesthetics has crippled our aesthetic judgment."[1] He was writing specifically about appreciation (or lack thereof) of Medieval and Byzantine art. Since then, however, appreciation for the subtleties and nuances of non-Renaissance-based art has increased. When Western travellers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries first came into contact with Eastern Church icons, they disparaged them as artless. The English doctor Samuel Collins (1619–1670) commented on Russian icons in the mid-seventeenth century: "Their imagery is very pitiful painting, flat and ugly, after the Greek manner."[2] This opinion reflected that of Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574), who in the previous century referred to "that crude Greek style" and complained that "their rough, awkward, and commonplace style, owing nothing to study, had been taught according to custom by one artist to another for many, many years without the painters of those times ever thinking of improving their design by the beauty of coloring or some other innovation."[3] In the past century, we saw the study of icons take its place alongside the study of other art genres. As the Church historian Diarmaid MacCulloch (1951–) remarked:

> Each icon follows a wealth of rules of composition built up since the sixth century to express particular theological or devotional propositions around sacred stories … Martha of Bethany busy in her kitchen can be a theologian.

1 P. A. Michelis, "Neo-Platonic Philosophy and Byzantine Art," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 11 (1952): 21.

2 Samuel Collins, *The Present State of Russia* (London: John Winter, 1671), 24. Europeans also made the same kind of remarks about African art before Picasso and Braque.

3 Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists*, trans. Julia Conway Bondanella (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 8–9.

> This combination has been … one of the great strengths of Orthodoxy, sustaining it through trials which by most reckonings ought to have eliminated it.[4]

Can we not ask whether aesthetic appreciation of "non-silent" intellectual achievements and developments is analogous? That is, if, upon looking into non-Western philosophy and literature, we feel prompted to ask "Where is their Abelard?" is this not akin to walking into an icon museum and asking "Where are the Botticellis?" And would not such a question reflect more upon the questioner than upon the contents of the museum?

Yet, that would be too facile a response—to dismiss the question and disparage the questioner. As a historian, I take as my task to provide plausible and coherent explanations for the primary source testimony at hand. If we look at that source testimony, we do indeed find in Western European sources of the eleventh and twelfth centuries a critical, analytical approach towards theology and the world, "logic coming to life," as the Jesuit priest and historian of philosophy F. C. Copleston (1907–1994) described it,[5] which is manifested in the works of, among others, Peter Abelard (1079–1142). But we do not find the same kind of source testimony in the areas served by the Eastern Church, or at least not to the same degree. Thomson, by raising and repeating the question of "Where is the Russian Abelard?" is, in effect, challenging us to provide better explanations for why there was an Abelard (i.e., why logic "came to life") in Europe, but not elsewhere. Or, to put it another way, as Fedotov asked: why Paris and not Kiev?

Thomson's view of the absence of Rus' intellectual activity parallels other scholars' attitudes towards Eastern Church culture in general. For example, Frederick B. Artz (1894–1983), in his book, *The Mind of the Middle Ages*, describes Byzantine scholarship and theology this way:

> The Byzantine scholar was held down by the overwhelming prestige and authority of the ancients and by an authoritarian church and state. The Byzantine scholar, like the scholars in the Latin West until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, commented endlessly on the learning inherited from the past, but almost never doubted this learning or tried to move beyond it. One of the worst features of Byzantine learning was its passion for compends, abridgements, and anthologies; they even abridged the *Iliad*. In theology the great and fundamental writers had been Greeks like Origen and the Cappadocian Fathers. The last of the great theologians, John of Damascus in the eighth century, had written a huge summary of theology, and after him theologians either rethrashed the old material, or, like Photius, in the ninth century and later, they discussed chiefly the relations with the

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4 Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Silence: A Christian History* (New York: Viking, 2013), 110. See Ágnes Kriza, "The Russian *Gnadenstuhl*," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 79 (2016): 28–29.

5 F. C. Copleston, *A History of Medieval Philosophy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 65.

Roman church and the advisability for a reunion with Rome. At its worst, this Byzantine theological literature, like that of Latin Christendom, is monot-onous, repetitious, and stereotyped, with endless quotations from the Bible and the Church Fathers. Byzantine theology never produced an Abelard, a Bonaventura, or an Aquinas.[6]

Artz articulates here an all-too-common prevailing notion in modern historiography: that Byzantine intellectual achievement was "held down" and that it "almost never doubted or tried to move beyond" the learning inherited from the past. But one might ask why it should doubt or try to move beyond what from their point of view was the Truth. Further, if it did not try to move beyond, then what was there to be held down?

We do find in Byzantine sources, however, evidence of a holding down of the nascent analytical movement of John Italos in the eleventh century, the suppression of which seems to have succeeded. Likewise, the Western Church tried to hold down the analytical approach that Abelard among others espoused in the twelfth century, but it did not completely succeed. Abelard certainly did not represent the consensus view of his time in the Western Church. His views were twice condemned—at the Council of Soissons in 1121 and at Sens in 1140—both victories for that consensus view, which was represented by Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153).[7] The fact that Bernard was canonized, and Abelard was not, is indicative of whose views prevailed at the time. Abelard had an influence on his contemporaries and had followers, but by the next (thirteenth) century, his influence had dissipated in both the fields of dialectic and theology,[8] and he was known mostly for his affair with Heloise (1090–1164). For many centuries, Abelard the dialectician was virtually forgotten by the historiography. Only in the nineteenth century was interest in him revived. Only then did he become the hero of logical reasoning and the precursor of modern intellectual thought.

Perhaps it may seem paradoxical that Western Christendom, through the eleventh century, had far less direct knowledge of Plato and Aristotle than Byzantium did. Of Plato's work only the *Timaeus* was known in Western Christendom directly (although incompletely). According to the Finnish–Swedish literary historian E. N. Tigerstedt (1907–1979) and the American medievalist Charles Homer Haskins (1870–1937), the *Meno* and *Phaedo* were not translated until Aristippas, the archdeacon of Catania in 1156 and principal officer of the Sicilian *curia* from 1160 to 1162, did so in Sicily, but even then they were not widely

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6 Frederick B. Artz, *The Mind of the Middle Ages: An Historical Survey A.D. 200–1500*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 112–13.

7 For what Abelard was accused of, see Constant J. Mews, *Abelard and His Legacy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001). For the role that Bernard played in the "Bernardine epoch," see Hayden V. White, "The Gregorian Ideal and Saint Bernard of Clairvaux," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 21 (1960): 321–48.

8 Yukio Iwakuma, "Influence," in *The Cambridge Companion to Abelard*, ed. Jeffrey E. Brower and Kevin Guilfoy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 306.

available.[9] Haskins and a number of other scholars have also pointed out that when Abelard wrote his *Dialectics* in 1121, he had to depend mainly on second-hand commentators and on the translations by Boethius (480–524) of the *Categories* and *On Interpretation* because the other relevant works of Aristotle—the *Prior Analytics*, the *Posterior Analytics*, and, more importantly, the *Topics* and its addendum the *Sophistic Refutations* (the so-called "New Logic")—seem not to have been available to him. At least, he did not use them.[10] This fact has struck a number of scholars as odd, since Boethius's sixth-century translations were the ones used after this date—that is, after James the Venetian and Greek (Iacobus Veneticus Grecus) is recorded in 1128 to have translated them anew.[11] According to the English historian of the Middle Ages R. W. Southern (1912–2001), the few works of Aristotle that were known (like the *Categories*) were virtually ignored.[12]

Artz himself saw a similarity between the Greek scholars of Byzantium and the Latin scholars in the Western Church until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, just as he saw a similarity between Byzantine theological literature and "that of Latin Christendom"; that is, "monotonous, repetitious, and stereotyped." If the two literatures were so similar, then what was different about Western Christendom that saw it succumb to analytical thinking in spite of intense and concerted attempts to prevent it from doing so?

Before pursuing this question further, I would like to state two premises and present my working hypothesis, to provide some idea where I am headed with these notions. The first premise is a well-known one and is widely accepted: theology was the crown jewel of disciplined thought in both the Eastern and Western Churches. It affected and, to a certain degree, determined the confines within which all conceptual thinking was supposed to take place. As the Russian Orthodox theologian and historian John Meyendorff (1926–1992) wrote:

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9 E. N. Tigerstedt, *The Decline and Fall of the Neoplatonic Interpretation of Plato: An Outline and Some Observations* (Helsinki: Societas Scientariarum Fennica, 1974), 11; Charles Homer Haskins, "The Greek Element in the Renaissance of the Twelfth Century," *American Historical Review* 25 (1920): 604–5.

10 Charles Homer Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927), 226. Emile Bréhier, *The History of Philosophy*, trans. Wade Baskin, 7 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963–1969), vol. 3: *The Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, 60–61. See also Richard McKeon, "General Introduction," in *Introduction to Aristotle*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), xlvii; Gordon Leff, *Paris and Oxford Universities in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries: An Institutional and Intellectual History* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1968), 130.

11 For a full discussion of this problem, see Haskins, *Mediaeval Science*, 226–33. But see Felix Reichmann, *The Sources of Western Literacy: The Middle Eastern Civilizations* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1980), 172, who stated that Gerhard of Cremona translated the *Anterior* and *Posterior Analytics* from Arabic in the twelfth century. Cf. Martin Grabmann, "Aristoteles im 12. Jahrhundert," in his *Mittelalterliches Geistleben. Abhandlungen zur Geschichte der Scholastik und Mystik*, ed. Ludwig Ott, 3 vols. (Munich: Max Hueber, 1926–1956), 3:81; and Martin Grabmann, *Forschungen über die lateinischen Aristotelesübersetzungen des XIII. Jahrhunderts* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1916), 139–40.

12 R[ichard] W[illiam] Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), 180.

> In Byzantine society—as well as in the Western, early medieval world—theological concepts, convictions and beliefs were present in practically all aspects of social, or individual life. They were not only used at episcopal synods, or polemical debates between representatives of divided churches, or enshrined in treaties, sermons, anthologies and patristic collections. They were heard or sung, on a daily basis, even by the illiterate, in the hymnology of the church. They were unavoidable in political matters, based on a religious view of kingship ... Theological presuppositions were also involved in economic and social realities, as shown, for example, in the Church's attitude towards usury, or in requirements connected with marriage, or the religious basis of regulating church property, or the theological rationale which determined forms of art and iconography.[13]

There are those who would disagree with this assertion. Gary A. Abraham, for example, argued that historians have not understood the views of the American sociologist Robert K. Merton (1910–2003) on the Scientific Revolution in England because they define religion as a set of doctrines whereas Merton perceived religion as a set of "dominant cultural values and sentiments," which can act as a "social force" distinct from any theological basis.[14] Thus, Abraham argued that understanding the difference between formal theology and popular religious concepts is crucial, at least in the case of Merton, for understanding his views correctly. But this may represent a different time when secularization of society was already beginning to occur and theology was losing its hegemony. Thus, to investigate the question of why analytical reasoning became so prominent in Western Christendom, we need to understand the differences between the theology of the Eastern and Western Churches.

My second premise has found less scholarly agreement: the conceptual model of Christian theology was essentially borrowed from pagan Neoplatonic philosophy. Or, as the American chronicler of Neoplatonism R. T. Wallis has stated: "The dominant trend of Christian theology, in both its Platonic and Aristotelian forms, has always been Neoplatonic."[15] Perhaps "always" is too categorical a term, for it was only as the result of the work of Augustine (354–430) in Latin Christendom[16] and of Iamblichos (ca. 245–ca. 325) and Proclos (412–485) in Greek Christendom that Neoplatonism was coalesced with Christian theology.[17]

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13 John Meyendorff, "The Mediterranean World in the Thirteenth Century, Theology: East and West," *The 17th International Byzantine Congress: Major Papers*, Washington, DC, August 3–8, 1986 (New Rochelle: A. D. Caratzas, 1986), 669–70.

14 Gary A. Abraham, "Misunderstanding the Merton Thesis: A Boundary Dispute between History and Sociology," *Isis* 74 (1983): 373.

15 R. T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism* (London: Gerald Duckworth, 1972), 160.

16 See, e.g., the studies of Gerard O'Daly, *Platonism Pagan and Christian: Plotinus and Augustine* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001).

17 I have in mind the *Elements of Theology* (a.k.a. *Metaphysical Elements*) by Proclus and *On the Mysteries* by Iamblichos. See Proclus, *Metaphysical Elements*, trans. Thos. M. Johnson (Osceoloa: Press of the Republican, 1909); and Iamblichos, *On the Mysteries*, trans. Emma C. Clark (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003).

My working hypothesis, which results from these two premises, is that the difference in the way theologians interpreted the Neoplatonic model in the Eastern Church and the Western Church, in particular how Aristotelian logic related to it, led to a fundamental difference in *mentalité*, which in turn left an opening for analytical reasoning to develop in Western Church theology, whereas no such opening existed in Eastern Church theology. At the time when the Roman Empire was beginning to split into two halves and as Christianity was gaining first legitimacy and then dominance, a series of compromises of antithetical philosophical and theological views occurred. Each compromise laid the groundwork for the next compromise in an evolving synthesis. The Church Fathers, in order to gain legitimacy among the pagan elite, adopted and synthesized with early Christianity a respectable form of pagan philosophy—Neoplatonism. The version of Neoplatonism the Western Church Fathers adopted was itself a synthesis of features of mysticism with the Aristotelian logic of the Roman Stoics. As a result, the Western Church allowed the teaching of dialectic within the school curriculum as one of the seven liberal arts. The initial function of dialectic in determining knowledge, however, was limited. It took centuries for the role of dialectic to be expanded, and it did so against serious opposition.

By the eleventh century, a synthesis of reason and faith had evolved such that dialectic could be used to describe particulars as long as those particulars *coincided* with those that faith had already determined. In the thirteenth century, a new synthesis emerged in which, as a result of the acceptance of dialectic as a descriptive tool and the influx of Aristotelian texts (especially the *Topics* and *Sophistic Refutations*), dialectic was allowed a diagnostic role in determining particulars, as long as those particulars *did not contradict* the particulars that faith had determined. This difference between *coinciding* and *not contradicting* was an important one, for it amounted to another step up for dialectic. It meant that dialectic had to itself the entire realm of this world, which Neoplatonism dismissed as unimportant. This new synthesis, in turn, laid the groundwork for the further expansion of the role of reason in Renaissance humanism, the Scientific Revolution, and the Enlightenment.

An important aspect of this expansion of reason was the reintroduction into Western Christendom of Roman law. Around 1076, a copy of the Justinian law code, the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, lost in Western Christendom since 603, reappeared. Shortly after that discovery, Irnerius (Guarnerius) (ca. 1050–after 1125), a teacher significantly of liberal arts at the University of Bologna, began glossing and teaching students from the *Digest*, a summary of the key points in the law code. Irnerius's work represented the culmination of a process of reclassification that had begun over 100 years earlier of introducing dialectic into jurisprudence, which before had been almost solely in the realm of rhetoric. We see this process already occurring in Anselm of Besate's *Rhetorimachia* (ca. 1050).[18] R. W. Southern dismissed Anselm's

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18 Anselm of Besate, *Anselm der Peripatetiker*, ed. Ernst Dümmler (Halle: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1872), 17; cf. Anselm of Besate, *The Rhetorimachia*, in Beth Susan Bennett, "The *Rhetorimachia* of Anselm de Besate: Critical Analysis and Translation" (PhD dissertation, University of Iowa, 1981), 92–160.

Rhetorimachia as not much of a work of rhetoric.[19] But if one understands that Anselm was already making the connection between dialectic and law, then one can see his work in a different light. Pointedly, in the *Rhetorimachia* Anselm set up an imaginary judicial case on Ciceronian categories of oratory in which he alternated acting as the prosecutor of his cousin Rotiland and advocate for the defence of himself.[20] A result of the making of this connection was the prominent Bologna Law School and what many consider to be the founding of the Western system of advocacy jurisprudence.[21] As secular thought gained more and more distance from theology, dialectic as a diagnostic tool gained greater application on its own, not only in the law but in astronomy, history, mathematics, philosophy, and physics.

In the Eastern Church, after the initial synthesis of early Christianity with pagan Neoplatonism, further compromises were avoided so as to maintain the purity of faith. In part, this avoidance can be explained by the form of Neoplatonism adopted in the Eastern Church, which rejected dialectic even as a descriptive tool. Any attempts to use dialectic as a diagnostic tool in matters of doctrine were immediately suppressed.[22] Indicative of this suppression is the absence of direct evidence of dialectic in the school curriculum in Byzantium (see below). In this respect, the centralized power of the Eastern Roman Empire helped maintain theological purity. I suggest that the Western Church allowed a space for dialectic to develop as a discipline in its own right and eventually to grow and to dominate conceptual thinking in the secular culture, while the Eastern Church eliminated that space and thereby precluded a similar phenomenon from happening. The British scholar Ian Richard Netton pointed out: "The reconciliation of a pagan philosophy with the dogmatic theology of any revealed religion poses enormous problems and has evolved different approaches over the ages from those … scholastics who have attempted the synthesis. A pagan philosophy like Neoplatonism was received differently according to the nature of the religion with which it collided."[23] If Neoplatonism interacted differently with Western Christianity and with Eastern Christianity, and to a certain extent accounted for the differences between these churches, then we would expect to see the results of those differences not only in theology but also in everyday practice.

By the eleventh century, the subcurrent of analytical thinking, or what later came to be called reasoning,[24] was already inherently stronger in the Western

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19 Southern, *Making of the Middle Ages*, 180n1.
20 Beth Susan Bennett, "The Significance of the *Rhetorimachia* of Anselm de Besate to the History of Rhetoric," *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 5 (1987): 247–48.
21 See, e.g., Charles Homer Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927), 199–200. See also David Knowles, *The Evolution of Medieval Thought* (New York: Vintage, 1962), 153–84; and Harold J. Berman, *Law and Revolution: The Formation of the Western Legal Tradition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 123–27.
22 For the difference between dialectic as a descriptive tool and as a diagnostic tool, see below.
23 Ian Richard Netton, *Muslim Neoplatonists: An Introduction to the Thought of the Brethren of Purity* (Ikhwā al-Ṣafā') (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), 33.
24 The earliest use of the word "reasoning" in English meaning the process of reasons, arguments, proofs, etc., derives, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, from the fourteenth century—namely Chaucer's *Troylus* (ca. 1374).

Church than in the Eastern Church. In part, this relative strength can be attributed to the preservation of *Marriage of Mercury with Philology* by Martianus Capella (fl. ca. 410–420). It was on this fifth-century work, well known in the Western Church, less well known in the Eastern Church, that the curriculum of the seven liberal arts—the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*—was based. Among those arts was *dialectica*, which is now often referred to as logic, but in the High Middle Ages was called the "new logic" to distinguish it from the "old logic" of the non-dialectic type. Their relationship has a curious history.

In late antiquity, logic (*logica*) and dialectic (*dialectica*) were at times seen as two different, although related, subject areas. Albinus (fl. ca. 150), as subsequently also Plotinos (204–270), considered dialectic to be a subject that dealt with the eternal and the divine and was, therefore, superior to formal logic.[25] The Stoics had considered grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic to be subsets of logic, and they may have been the first, as the classicist David L. Wagner has asserted, to consider these three areas of study as a unit.[26] In turn, they viewed logic (and the rest of the trivium) as a branch of philosophy. In the Middle Ages, logic included dialectic and rhetoric as its component parts—"the shut and open fist"[27]—but was not considered philosophy at the time (see below). Not until the Scholastics does dialectic once again become fully associated with philosophy. And then the groundwork for that association derives from the work of people like Abelard and the twelfth-century philosopher Hugh of St. Victor (1078–1141).[28] According to the British medievalist A. Victor Murray (1890–1967), it was only in the twelfth century, "[w]hen … the method of dialectic was strengthened by the translation of the 'nova logica' of Aristotle, i.e. the Prior and the Posterior Analytics, the Topics, and the Sophistic Elenchi," that "dialectic … became identified with philosophy itself."[29]

Examining the trees of knowledge of the time might be instructive for our own study. The trees of both the schools of Hugh of St. Victor and of Abelard, which R. W. Southern reconstructed, place the subjects of the trivium as subsets of eloquence, not of philosophy. The subjects of the quadrivium are subsets of mathematics, which in turn is a subset of theoretical philosophy. In other words, these schools placed the quadrivium under philosophy and saw dialectic as distinct from philosophy. In comparison, the tree of knowledge given by the Jesuit-educated Iurii Krizhanich (ca. 1618–1683) in the seventeenth century describes the subjects of

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25 Philip Merlan, "Greek Philosophy from Plato to Plotinus," in *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, ed. A. H[ilary] Armstrong (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 68. See also Plotinos, *The Enneads*, trans. Stephen MacKenna, 2nd ed. (London: Faber & Faber, 1956), 39 (I.3.5).
26 David L. Wagner, "The Seven Liberal Arts and Classical Scholarship," in *The Seven Liberal Arts in the Middle Ages*, ed. David L. Wagner (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), 11.
27 See Henry Osborn Taylor, *The Medieval Mind: A History of the Development of Thought and Emotion in the Middle Ages*, 4th ed., 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1927), 1:220.
28 See *The "Didascalicon" of Hugh of Saint Victor: A Medieval Guide to the Arts*, trans. Jerome Taylor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 81–82.
29 A[lbert] Victor Murray, *Abelard and St. Bernard: A Study in Twelfth Century "Modernism"* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967), 9.

MAN

EXCELLENCES — EVILS

Stature   Reason   Eloquence   Ignorance   Concupiscence   Infirmity

R   E   M   E   D   I   E   S

ELOQUENCE   PHILOSOPHY   VIRTUE   PRACTICAL SCIENCES

Grammar   Logic   Rhetoric   Prudence   Justice   Fortitude   Temperance

Theoretical   Practical   Mechanical   Magic

Mathematics   Theology   Physics   Ethics   Economics   Politics

Arithmetic   Music   Astronomy   Geometry

Instrumental   Human   Cosmic

Instrumental
1. Metre
2. Rhythm
3. Melody

Human
1. Humours
2. Virtues
3. Soul & body

Cosmic
1. Planets
2. Elements
3. Times

Mechanical
1. Weaving
2. Defence
3. Navigation
4. Agriculture
5. Hunting
6. Medicine
7. Theatre

Magic
1. Astrology
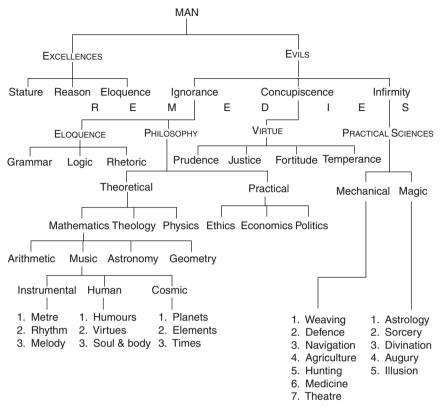2. Sorcery
3. Divination
4. Augury
5. Illusion

**Figure 1: The Tree of Knowledge (School of Hugh of St. Victor).
Source: R. W. Southern, *Medieval Humanism and Other Studies*
(Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970).**

the trivium and quadrivium as the "seven noble sciences" under secular knowledge, in contrast to religious knowledge. As such, he groups the subjects of the quadrivium under mathematics, while he lists the subjects of the trivium under "logic," which, in turn, he places, along with ethics and physics, as a subset of philosophy.[30] This means that we have to be careful to determine what each writer means by "logic," "dialectic," and "philosophy." We cannot assume these terms are interchangeable or that they even overlap. Nor can we assume that because we have evidence of dialectic being applied in secular terms it is also being applied in religious terms.

It would therefore help in this investigation for me to define exactly what I mean by "dialectic." As with many definitions in philosophy, we begin with Aristotle, who distinguished between two types of legitimate formal reasoning on the one hand, and non-legitimate reasoning on the other, based on the nature of their "premises"

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30 Iurii Krizhanich, "Discourses on Government," trans. John M. Little and Basil Dmytryshyn, in their *Russian Statecraft: The Politics of Iurii Krizhanich* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), 94.
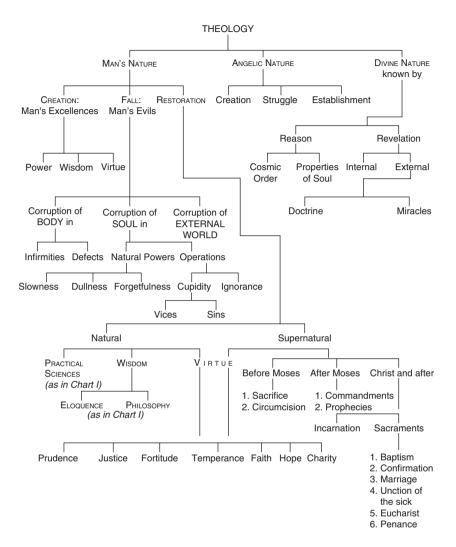
THEOLOGY

MAN'S NATURE — ANGELIC NATURE — DIVINE NATURE
known by

CREATION: FALL: RESTORATION   Creation   Struggle   Establishment
Man's Excellences   Man's Evils

Reason   Revelation

Power   Wisdom   Virtue   Cosmic   Properties   Internal   External
Order   of Soul

Corruption of   Corruption of   Corruption of   Doctrine   Miracles
BODY in   SOUL in   EXTERNAL
WORLD

Infirmities   Defects   Natural Powers   Operations

Slowness   Dullness   Forgetfulness   Cupidity   Ignorance

Vices   Sins

Natural   Supernatural

PRACTICAL   WISDOM   V I R T U E   Before Moses   After Moses   Christ and after
SCIENCES
(as in Chart I)   1. Sacrifice   1. Commandments
2. Circumcision   2. Prophecies

ELOQUENCE   PHILOSOPHY
(as in Chart I)   Incarnation   Sacraments

Prudence   Justice   Fortitude   Temperance   Faith   Hope   Charity   1. Baptism
2. Confirmation
3. Marriage
4. Unction of
   the sick
5. Eucharist
6. Penance

Figure 2: The Tree of Knowledge (School of Abelard).
Source: R. W. Southern, *Medieval Humanism*.

(ἀρχέι). The first type of legitimate formal reasoning, which he called *apodeiksis* (ἀποδέιξις), or the demonstrative syllogism, is based on generally agreed-upon premises. Contrary to the popular view, the syllogism does not move from things known to things unknown. As Aristotle described it in the *Posterior Analytics*, the application of *apodeiksis* does not derive new facts, it merely demonstrates the relationship between those facts already known. Thus, it is when a discipline has its "scientific knowledge" (ἐπιστήμη) completely demonstrated that we can call it a scientific discipline.

The second kind of legitimate formal reasoning according to Aristotle, which he describes in the *Topics*, is *dialectic* (διαλεκτική), which he defines as a type of inductive reasoning where the premises (ἔνδοξα) are generally, but not necessarily completely, agreed upon. In dialectic one can move to things previously unknown or
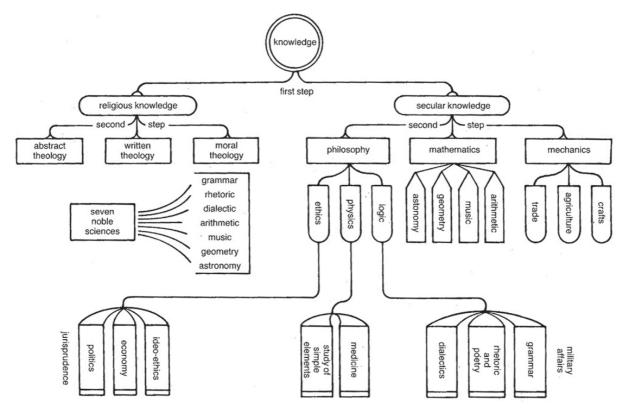
Figure 3: The Tree of Knowledge (Iurii Krizhanich).
Source: Iurii Krizhanich, "Discourses on Government," in *Russian Statecraft: The Politics of Iurii Krizhanich,* trans. John M. Little and Basil Dmytryshyn (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), 93, "Figure 2: The divisions of learning."

unaccepted. The result, however, is not "scientific knowledge" but probable knowledge. The third kind of reasoning is *sophistic* (σοφιστικός), or eristic. This is non-legitimate reasoning in which the premises seem to be generally accepted but are not and the sophist seems to reason from accepted opinions but does not actually do so.[31] The two types of legitimate formal reasoning, syllogism and dialectic, in combination, are what is commonly referred to as "Aristotelian logic."

But this formal description does nothing to help us understand the power of dialectic in practice. For this, we must turn to American scholar of philosophy Robin Smith's "heterodox" view of "gymnastic dialectic" as an "argumentative sport" in ancient Athens. Smith begins his description by pointing out what has been said before by others, that "[d]ialectical argument differs from demonstrative reasoning in that it is intrinsically a kind of exchange between participants acting in some way as opponents."[32] We see this practice, among other places, in Plato's dialogues. But Smith proceeds further to describe "structured contests, with rules and judges" in which

> one participant took the "Socratic" role and asked questions, while the other responded to them. The answerer chose, or was assigned, a thesis to defend; the questioner's goal was to refute the thesis. In order to do this, the questioner would try to get the answerer to accept premises from which such a refutation followed. However, the questioner could only ask questions which could be answered by a "yes" or "no"; questions like "What is the largest city in Lacedaemonia?" were not allowed.[33]

On the basis of these argument contests, Smith defines *dialectic* as "*argument directed at another person which proceeds by asking questions.*"[34] We can go further and propose that the intent of dialectic is, within a structured thought process, to force an opponent to abandon a premise he or she holds or to get them to accept a premise they did not accept previously. Thus, while rhetoric was intended to persuade an audience through beauty of formulation, dialectic was meant to defeat an opponent through bruteness of structure.[35] The concept of questioning premises and arranging intellectual contests between opponents is a common occurrence in the Western Church and its descendants. We see it in the "devil's advocate" procedure for ascertaining the sainthood of a prospective candidate. We also see it in the disputations that were common in Parisian schools of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and that Abelard engaged in against William of Champeaux (1070–1122) and Anselm of Laon

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31 Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*; Aristotle, *Topics*. See John Herman Randall, Jr., *Aristotle* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 38–40. See also Berman, *Law and Revolution*, 132–34. Cf. David Bloch, "John of Salisbury on Science and Knowledge," in *A Companion to John of Salisbury*, ed. Christophe Grellard and Frederique Lachaud (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 291–92.
32 Robin Smith, "Logic," in *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 58.
33 Smith, "Logic," 59.
34 Smith, "Logic," 60 [italics in original].
35 Perhaps Czesław Miłosz had this coercive aspect of dialectic in mind when he made the observation that "[t]he pressure of the state machine is nothing compared with the pressure of a convincing argument." Czesław Miłosz, *The Captive Mind* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), 12.

(ca. 1050–1117). We also see it in debates carried on within the Church, as when Martin Luther (1483–1546) debated Johann Eck (1486–1543) at Leipzig in 1519.[36]

In the Byzantine Empire, a dissociation between logic and philosophy similar to that in early medieval Western Europe seems also to have occurred. Formal Aristotelian logic may not have been taught as part of "philosophy" after the closing of the Athenian Academy by the Emperor Justinian in 529 and the ousting of non-Christians from the Alexandrian Academy in the sixth century. The Alexandrian Academy retained enough Aristotelian logic, however, so that, when the Muslims captured Alexandria in 646, it could be incorporated into Islamic philosophy,[37] while exiles from the Athenian Academy fled to Sassanid Persia where their teaching was also subsequently taken over by the Muslims. Nor is there much evidence that the trivium and quadrivium were the basis of the educational curriculum in Byzantium before the thirteenth century. The Byzantine poet John Tzetzes (ca. 1110–1180), himself a grammarian, complained in the twelfth century that a "liberal education" (ἐγκύκλιος παιδέια) had been reduced to grammar alone.[38] Indeed, we have little evidence concerning what the standard curriculum in Byzantium was before the thirteenth century.

The lack of evidence prompted the Belgian–American scientist and historian George Sarton (1884–1956) to suggest that the trivium and quadrivium were introduced to Byzantium by the Crusaders in 1204.[39] In response, the American classical philologist Aubrey Diller (1903–1985) argued that at least the quadrivium was known in Byzantium 200 years earlier.[40] What Diller was referring to and what Sarton had previously characterized as "[a] treatise on the quadrivium,"[41] published in 1556 by the German humanist Wilhelm Xylander (1532–1576), and formerly attributed to Michael Psellos (ca. 1017–1078), is a five-part work including philosophy, arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy. Diller equated the "philosophy" of the text with logic, for it seems to have included the study of Aristotle's *Categories*, *On Interpretation*, and both *Analytics*.[42] This commentary, which has

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36 For a brief history of disputations, see Donald Ostrowski, "The *Debate with Iosif* (*Prenie s Iosifom*) as a Fictive Disputation," in *Iosif Volotskii and Eastern Christianity: Essays Across Seventeen Centuries*, ed. David Goldfrank, Valeria Nollan, and Jennifer Spock (Washington, DC: New Academia, 2017), esp. 184–99.

37 Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 1; Richard Walzer, "Porphyry and the Arabic Tradition," in *Porphyre. 8 exposés suivis de discussions*, ed. Heinrich Dörrie, vol. 12 of "Entretiens sur l'Antiquité classique" (Geneva: Fondation Hardt, 1966), 276.

38 John Tzetzes, *Historiae*, ed. Peter Aloisius M. Leone (Naples: Liberia Scientifica editrice, 1968), 448–49, *Chiliades*, XI, § 377, ll. 527–28.

39 George Sarton, review of Paul Tannery, *Quadrivium de Georges Pachymère*, in *Isis* 34 (1943): 218.

40 Aubrey Diller, "The Byzantine Quadrivium," *Isis* 36 (1945): 132. Diller cites Sarton's own history of science to contest his suggestion.

41 George Sarton, *Introduction to the History of Science*, vol. 1: *From Homer to Omar Khayyam* (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1927), 750.

42 Diller, "The Byzantine Quadrivium," 132. The Soviet–American Byzantinist Alexander P. Kazhdan (1922–1997) and Ann Wharton Epstein equated the "philosophy" of this work with "logic" but did not mention that this work also contains a section on astronomy. A. P. Kazhdan and Ann Wharton Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 149.

been dated to 1008,[43] does not tell us, however, what was taught in the school curriculum. And, despite the conclusion that Sarton and Diller drew from its containing the four subjects of the quadrivium, a five-part work is not a quadrivium.

The British philologist N. G. Wilson (1935–) argued that "the existence of commentaries [such as this one], especially if they are of an elementary character with many explanations of individual words, is a further indication that a text formed part of a school curriculum."[44] While this may be a reasonable inference, Wilson then assumes that Western commentaries were available and widely used in Byzantium.[45] We have little evidence that formal instruction in Byzantium included the treatises of Porphyry (ca. 232–ca. 305) or Boethius on dialectic, or those of Capella, the Roman statesman Cassiodorus (ca. 490–575), or the encyclopedist Isidore of Seville (ca. 560–636) on the subjects of the liberal arts. And, as the Byzantinist Ann Moffat had to admit, the Byzantines had nothing equivalent to the works of those writers.[46] We do find references to "grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy," but philosophy in early Byzantium, as the British Byzantinist Georgina Buckler (1868–1953) pointed out, may not have been defined the same way as in Western Europe: "The letters of Synesius show that under Hypatia at Alexandria the 'mysteries of philosophy' comprised mathematics and physics … We have then to admit that neither the names nor the sequence of the different branches of Byzantine education are very clear to us."[47] But it was precisely the study of mathematics and physics that was understood to be *philosophy* in medieval Western Europe before Scholasticism.

There appears to be an assumption in the historiography that the subject "philosophy" in Byzantium was "dialectic" as taught in the Western Church. As Plotinos asked in his first *Ennead*, although in a different context: "Is Dialectic, then, the same as Philosophy?"[48] Even though Proclos tells us that dialectic is "the purest

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43 V. Rose, "Pseudo-Psellus und Gregorius Monachus," *Hermes* 2 (1867): 467. Another commentary, formerly attributed to Psellos, the *Synopsis Orgami*, was not an original Byzantine work. In the nineteenth century, the Scottish common sense philosopher William Hamilton (1788–1856) asserted that the *Synopsis Orgami* "is itself a mere garbled version of the great logical text-book of the west," i.e., Petrus Hispanus's *Summulae logicales*. William Hamilton, *Discussions on Philosophy and Literature* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1853), 129n.
44 N[igel] G[uy] Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium* (London: Gerald Duckworth, 1983), 22.
45 See, e.g., Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, 13, 25.
46 Ann Moffat, "Early Byzantine School Curricula and a Liberal Education," *Byzance et les Slaves. Etudes des Civilisation. Mélanges Ivan Dujčev* (Paris: Association des amis des études archéologiques des mondes Byzantino-Slaves et du Christianisme Oriental, 1979), 276.
47 Georgina Buckler, "Byzantine Education," in *Byzantium: An Introduction to East Roman Civilization*, ed. Norman H. Baynes and H. St. L. B. Moss (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1943), 206.
48 Plotinos, *The Enneads*, 39 (I.3.5). Boethius discusses this question in his *Commentaries on the Isagoge of Porphyry*. Ancii Manlii Severni Boethii, *Commentaria in Porphyrium a se translatum* in *Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Latina* (hereafter *PL*), ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, 221 vols. (Paris: Migne, 1844–1855), 64: cols. 73–75; for an English translation, see *Selections from Medieval Philosophers: Augustine to Albert the Great*, ed. and trans. Richard McKeon (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), 75–77.

part of philosophy,"[49] we have to maintain a distinction between the two. Copleston has stated that, in the West, during the Dark Ages when there was no speculative philosophy to speak of, dialectic constituted whatever philosophy there was.[50] Yet, dialectic had to be reintroduced into the curriculum by Alcuin of York (735–804). For after Isidore of Seville, we have no evidence of interest in dialectic, or even the trivium as such, for over 150 years, until Alcuin wrote his pedagogical treatises on grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic.[51]

In Middle Byzantium,[52] the direct evidence indicates that only two subjects of the trivium—grammar and rhetoric—were taught before students advanced to one or more subjects of the quadrivium: arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. Then, philosophy (i.e., mathematics and physics) was taught as the keystone of education. And we do encounter the phrase "grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy," in sources of the time.[53] But the French historian Louis Bréhier (1868–1951), in his study of higher education in Constantinople, describes philosophy as "comprising not only metaphysics and morals, but the sciences properly speaking, physics, natural history, and astronomy."[54] Philosophy, in this sense, does not seem to have included dialectic either in Western Europe or in Byzantium. A commonly made assertion in the historiography to the effect that dialectic was part of the curriculum before the end of the twelfth century in Byzantium appears to be based on the assumption that, if grammar and rhetoric were taught, then the third part of the trivium, dialectic, must also have been taught. For example, the British Byzantinist J. M. Hussey (1907–2006) wrote: "The first stage [of education] was that which was known as the Trivium

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49 *Procli Diadochi in primum Euclidis Elementorum librum commentarii*, ed. Gottfried Friedlein (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1873), p. 42, ll. 15–16; Proclos, *The Philosophical and Mathematical Commentaries of Proclus on the First Book of Euclid's Elements*, trans. Thomas Taylor (London: T. Payne, 1788–1789), 79.

50 Copleston, *History of Medieval Philosophy*, 59, 65. Copleston seems to be understanding "philosophy" in the modern sense, that is, to include dialectic.

51 Alcuin, *Grammatica*, in *PL*, 101: cols. 849–902; Alcuin, *De rhetorica et de virtutibus*, in *Rhetores latini minores*, ed. Carl Halm (Leipzig: Teubner, 1863), 525–50; Alcuin, *De dialectica*, in *PL*, 101: cols. 949–76.

52 Middle Byzantium was defined by Cyril Mango as beginning "about the middle of the seventh century" and extending either to "the 1070s or with less justification, to ... 1204 ..." Cyril Mango, *Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1980), 1, cf. 4–5. Han George Beck dated it from "ca. 630" to either 1025 or, less likely, 1204. Hans Georg Beck, *Das byzantinische Jahrtausend* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1978), 31–32.

53 In *The Life of Michael Synkellos*, we find that he studied "grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy" ("τῆς γραμματικῆς καὶ ῥητορικῆς· καὶ φιλοσοφίας"). *The Life of Michael Synkellos*, ed. and trans. Mary B. Cunningham (Belfast: Belfast Byzantine Enterprises, 1991), 46–47. In the *Life of Theodore, Bishop of Edessa*, we find that he studied "grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy" ("γραμματικήν τε καὶ ῥτορικὴν καὶ φιλοσοφίαν"). I[van P.] Pomialovskii, ed., *Zhitie izhe vo sviatogo ottsa nashego Feodoro arkhiepiskopa edesskogo* (St. Petersburg: Imperatorskaia akademiia nauk, 1892), 6. And in the previously mentioned work of John Tzetzes, he refers to "grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy" ("γραμματικῆς, ῥητορικῆς αύ τῆς φιλοσοφίας"). Tzetzes, *Historiae*, 449, Chiliades, XI, § 377, l. 520.

54 Louis Bréhier, "Notes sur l'histoire de l'enseignement supérieur á Constantinople," *Byzantion. Revue internationale des études Byzantines* 3 (1926): 83.

in the west, comprising Grammar, Rhetoric, and Dialectic."[55] But, subsequently, she wrote: "When they had finished their training in grammar and rhetoric students proceeded to the higher course of lectures."[56] She did not mention dialectic as part of that training. The German historian of mathematics Kurt Vogel (1888–1985) stated that "Michael Italicus (second quarter of the twelfth century) taught not only grammar and rhetoric, but also 'the mathematics' (the Quadrivium including mechanics, optics, catoptrics, metrics, the theory of the centre of gravity) and theology."[57] Not only did Vogel not mention logic, but he used the term "Quadrivium" in an unusual way. Meyendorff asserted: "The universities taught Aristotle's logic as part of the 'general curriculum' required from students under the age of eighteen."[58] But Meyendorff cites no source for his statement. The American Byzantinist Dimiter G. Angelov wrote: "They studied some or all the subjects sometimes grouped under the rubric *enkyklios padeia*—grammar, rhetoric, philosophy (or at least dialectic), and the quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy)."[59] And Vogel again: "After Apuleius (c. A.D. 150) and Martianus Capella (first half of the fifth century) Roman schools usually followed a plan of instruction based on the seven liberal arts, and this division must also have been the plan followed in the early Byzantine schools."[60] Again, no source or evidence is cited.

The scholar of ancient and Byzantine philosophy Katerina Ierodiakonou went a little further in referring to evidence, but again not citing it. She asserted: "There is no doubt that ancient logic, and more specifically Aristotle's syllogistic, was taught extensively throughout the Byzantine era as a preliminary to more theoretical studies." The evidence that she referred to for this assertion is "not only by biographical information concerning the logical education of eminent Byzantine figures, but also by the substantial number of surviving Byzantine manuscripts of Aristotle's logical writings ... and of the related Byzantine scholia, paraphrases, and logical treatises."[61] What that "biographical information" is she did not say. And whatever "scholia, paraphrases, and logical treatises" as well as manuscript copies of Aristotle's writings on logic there may be in Byzantium, none of that tells us that dialectic was a standard part of the curriculum.

55 J[oan] M[ervyn] Hussey, *Church and Learning in the Byzantine Empire 867–1185* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1963; rpt. of 1937 ed.), 61.

56 Hussey, *Church and Learning*, 62–63.

57 K. Vogel, "Byzantine Science," in *Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 4: *The Byzantine Empire*, pt. 2: *Government, Church and Civilisation*, ed. J. M. Hussey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 273n1.

58 John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes*, 2nd ed. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1983), 73.

59 Dimiter G. Angelov, "Emperors and Patriarchs as Ideal Children and Adolescents: Literary Conventions and Cultural Expectations," in *Becoming Byzantine: Children and Childhood in Byzantium*, ed. Arietta Papaconstantinou and Alice-Mary Talbot (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2009), 85–125.

60 Vogel, "Byzantine Science," 268n1.

61 Katerina Ierodiakonou, "The Anti-Logical Movement in the Fourteenth Century," in *Byzantine Philosophy and Its Ancient Sources*, ed. Katerina Ierodiakonou (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 219.

In contrast, Artz, while including the quadrivium, did not explicitly mention dialectic as part of the course curriculum in Byzantium. He included, besides Attic Greek and rhetoric, "arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy, and philosophy."[62] The British classicist L. D. Reynolds (1930–1999) and Wilson pointed to the fact that "[t]here are sporadic references in authors of widely differing dates to the *quadrivium* (τετρακτύς), but the evidence does not enable us to say whether the concepts of *trivium* and *quadrivium* were as influential in Byzantium as they were in the educational practice of Western Europe."[63] Deno Geanakoplos (1916–2007), an American scholar of Byzantine cultural and religious history and Italian Renaissance intellectual history, stated that "[b]oth Byzantine and Western Renaissance traditions contrast sharply with Western medieval practices, in which the emphasis ... was on logic and dialectics (Scholasticism) rather than on the humanities."[64] Thus, applying the nomenclature of one area to the other can be misleading.

When, in the ninth century, the Caesar Bardas (d. 869) set up his school in the Magnaura Palace, he established only four subjects: philosophy, geometry, astronomy, and rhetoric. We can infer this from the report in Theophanes Continuatus that Constantine Porphyrogenitus (r. 913–959), in the following century, appointed professors for these same subjects.[65] This combination of four subjects (with the substitution of philosophy for the quadrivium's music) would seem to indicate that we cannot assume Byzantine sources mean the classical quadrivium when we encounter the word τετρακτύς in the sources. One must acknowledge, however, that *argumentum ex silentio* is risky in regard to what we can conclude was not taught because a large number of sources on Byzantium have not been published or even examined.[66] Instead of trying to shape the evidence to conform to the hypothesis that the trivium and quadrivium, as described by Martianus Capella, Boethius, and Cassiodorus, were the basis of the curriculum in Byzantium, we might do better, in good Popperian fashion, to test such a hypothesis by trying to refute it and see if it can survive the attempted refutation.

According to the *vita* of Constantine-Cyril (826/7–869), the Apostle of the Slavs studied all the subjects of both the trivium and quadrivium, along with other subjects:

> In three months he mastered grammar and began other studies. He studied Homer and geometry with Leo and Photius, dialectics (дїачицѣ), and all

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62 Artz, *The Mind of the Middle Ages*, 109–10. See also Tamara Talbot Rice, *Everyday Life in Byzantium* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1967), 193.
63 L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 225.
64 *Byzantium: Church, Society, and Civilization Seen through Contemporary Eyes*, ed. and trans. Deno John Geanakoplos (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 401.
65 *Theophanes Continuatus: Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius monachus*, ed. Immanuel Bekker (Bonn: E. Weber, 1838), bk. 6, § 14, 445–46; cf. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, 141.
66 Dominic J. O'Meara, "Logic," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1245.

philosophical studies. In addition, he studied rhetoric, arithmetic, astronomy, and music, and all other Hellenic arts.[67]

Ševčenko proposed that the *vita* of Constantine was most likely written in or near Rome, and thus probably reflects what the Latinized Greek scholar–philosopher of the Western Church studied.

To be sure, we have references to Byzantines learning dialectic as part of their education, but what is meant by that in each case is not clear. For example, one *vita* of Theodore the Studite (759–826) (sometimes attributed to Theodore Daphnopates), tells us he studied "dialectic and syllogism" (διαλέξει κἀι ἀποδέιξεσω).[68] But another *vita* of Theodore (attributed to Michael the Monk), tells us the dialectic he studied was "called philosophy by experts on the matter."[69] Moffat, who has made a study of the school curriculum in Byzantium, argued that, although the seven liberal arts as they were known in Western Europe were not taught, "the idea of a fully-fledged advanced education embracing the liberal arts was never lost."[70] That may be, but I am aware of only one clear and unambiguous reference to the trivium and the quadrivium being taught in Byzantium, and it is relatively late. Around the year 1200, Nicholas Mesarites (1163/4–after 1216) described the curriculum of the church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, including discussion of dialectic.[71] Nonetheless, this was at a time when the trivium and quadrivium, as known in Western Europe, may already have been making their impact on Byzantine education through other channels.[72] For example, Leonardo of Pisa (ca. 1170–1245), who wrote *Liber abaci*

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67 *The Vita of Constantine and the Vita of Methodius*, trans. Marvin Kantor and Richard S. White, *Michigan Slavic Materials*, vol. 13 (Ann Arbor: Department of Slavic Languages and Literature, University of Michigan, 1976), 8–9.

68 Michael the Monk, *Vita et conversatio Theodori abbatis monasterii Studii*, in *Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Graeco-Latina* (hereafter *PG*), ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, 161 vols. (Paris: Migne, 1857–1866), 99: cols. 117, 120.

69 Michael the Monk, *Vita et conversatio Theodori*, in *PG*, 99: col. 237.

70 Moffat, "Early Byzantine School Curricula," 288.

71 Glanville Downey, trans. and ed., "Nikolaos Mesarites: Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, NS, 47, pt. 6 (1957): 894. Downey asserted that Mesarites discusses the trivium in section VII and the quadrivium in section XLII, but, in fact, it is just the reverse. Section VII describes the quadrivium ("all that is concerned with sacred music and with the arraying of numbers and their extension to infinity [geometry] and their reduction and division [arithmetic], and all that pertains to this profession of ours [astronomy]," Downey, "Nikolaos Mesarites," 865. While section XLII describes the trivium ("some putting questions to each other concerning letters and accents and the rules of short and long syllables and nouns and verbs [grammar]. Others are concerned with figures of speech and all kinds of forms of complete and incomplete rhetorical figures and with questions of clarity and force [rhetoric]. Others again deal with problems and questions of dialectic ..." Downey, "Nikolaos Mesarites," 894). Downey's confusion led him to equate Mesarites' phrase "this profession of ours" with rhetoric rather than to astronomy, but he is not alone in misidentifying the phrase. Heisenberg thought the phrase referred to medicine. August Heisenberg, *Grabeskirche und Apostelkirche. Zwei Basiliken Konstantins: Untersuchungen zur Kunst und Literatur des ausgehenden Altertums*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1908), 2: 17ff and 90ff.

72 Vogel, "Byzantine Science," 273.

(*Book of Calculation*) in 1202, visited Constantinople about this time and has been credited with introducing Arabic numerals into Byzantium. In short, until we have hard evidence, such as a specific description of the subject, we cannot justify the claim that dialectic was part of the Byzantine school curriculum before the thirteenth century.

I see this absence as more symptomatic of a deep structural difference than as a cause of "intellectual silence" in Rus'. In other words, even if it is found definitively that dialectic was part of the curriculum in Byzantium, it probably would not have changed matters in Rus'. To be sure, during the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries, we find frequent references in Byzantine writers to Porphyry's *Isagoge* (*Introduction*), which was used in Western Christendom as an introduction to the study of dialectic.[73] Yet, not only do we have trouble finding evidence that dialectic was taught as a regular part of the Byzantine curriculum, but dialectic clearly did not become part of the thinking of those who engaged in intellectual activities in the Eastern Church. After John of Damascus (676–749) in the eighth century, except for isolated note-taking,[74] the next Byzantines to take seriously the study of dialectic were the secular philosophers Michael Psellos and his student John Italos (ca. 1025–1085).

The princess historian Anna Komnene (1083–1153) has left an evocative description of John Italos from the point of view of someone who disliked him: "he was of such a boorish and barbarous disposition that he could not endure teachers even when learning from them. He was full of daring and barbarous rebelliousness and even before learning a thing, imagined he surpassed everybody else."[75] She claims that "the doctrines of Italus had obtained a great vogue and were upsetting the church."[76] She mentions several times his use of dialectic: "Being well versed in dialectics he caused daily commotions in public meeting places by stringing together sophistical quibbles, putting forward something of the kind and then maintaining an argument to match it."[77] She points out that, after Psellos left Constantinople, Italos became the "Chief of the Philosophers" (*hypatos ton philosophon*) and lectured on Plato and Aristotle. She acknowledges that "he undoubtedly was far cleverer than all others in expounding that most wonderful philosophic system, the Peripatetic,

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73 Hermiae Ammonius, *In Porphyrii Isagogen*, in *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* (hereafter *CAG*), vol. 4, no. 3 (1891), p. 34, ll. 21–24, called it the "introduction to all philosophy" (late fifth century). See also Elias, *Prolegomena philosophiae*, in *CAG*, vol. 18, no. 1 (1900), *passim* (sixth century) and David, *In Porphyrii Isagogen prooemium* in *CAG*, vol. 18, no. 2 (1904), p. 90, ll. 25f (sixth or seventh century).
74 Wilson reported that Leo the Philosopher knew Porphyry's *Isagoge* in the ninth century (Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, 84) and that Arethas (ca. 850–after 932) wrote a large quantity of notes on fols. 2–29 of the MS Vaticanus Urbinas Graecus 35 covering Porphyry's *Isagoge* and part of Aristotle's *Categories* (Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, 124). See also John Tzetzes' notes on Porphyry's *Isagoge* (Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, 191).
75 Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad of the Princess Anna Comnena: Being the History of the Reign of Her Father, Alexius I, Emperor of the Romans, 1081–1118 A.D.*, trans. Elizabeth A. S. Dawes (London: Keegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1928), 133.
76 Komnene, *The Alexiad*, 132.
77 Komnene, *The Alexiad*, 133.

and especially the dialectics of it,"[78] but she faults him for his shallow comprehension of "the other branches of literature": "for he stumbled over grammar and had never tasted the nectar of rhetoric."[79] She commends him for his skill in dialectical argument:

> His writings were crammed full of dialectic exordiums and his language in disputations redounded with "attempted proofs," more so in his discourses than in his written works. He was so strong in his arguments and so difficult to beat that his opponent would automatically be reduced to silence and to despair. For he would dig a pit either side of his question and hurl his interlocutor into a well of difficulties. Such skill the man had in dialectics, and by a rapid succession of questions he would overwhelm his opponents by confusing and daunting their minds. And it was impossible for anyone, who had once argued with him, to free himself from these labyrinths.[80]

Yet, she condemns his behaviour during these dialectical displays for not being satisfied to "allow his interlocutor simply to lose himself in embarrassment nor was he satisfied with sewing up his opponent's mouth and condemning him to silence," but would engage in fisticuffs and tear the beard and hair of his opponent. As a result, in Anna's view, "this fierce temper annulled and obliterated the credit he gained from his learning."[81] She points out that he "was the acknowledged master of all philosophy and the youth flocked to him" and this was because "he expounded to them the doctrines of Plato and Proclus, and of the two philosophers, Porphyry and Iamblichus, but especially the rules of Aristotle."[82] The similarities of Italos's brilliance in dialectical reasoning as well as the impact he had on the youth in the capital with that of his near-contemporary Abelard is noteworthy.

The British Byzantinist Cyril Mango (1928–) has suggested that, if the direction in which Psellos and Italos headed had continued, "Byzantium might have produced its Abelard."[83] But it did not continue. Psellos was careful not to expand his intellectual tour of pagan and Neoplatonic writers to theological matters, although in his letter to Patriarch John VIII Xiphilinus (r. 1064–1075), he states that he would like to do so.[84] John Italos, in contrast, was condemned for, among other things, applying dialectic to discussions of the incarnation of Christ.[85]

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78 Komnene, *The Alexiad*, 133–34.

79 Komnene, *The Alexiad*, 134.

80 Komnene, *The Alexiad*, 134.

81 Komnene, *The Alexiad*, 134.

82 Komnene, *The Alexiad*, 134.

83 Mango, *Byzantium*, 143.

84 Michael Psellos (Michele Psello), *Epistola a Giovanni Xifilino. Test critico, introduzione, traduzione e commentario*, ed. Ugo Criscuolo (Naples: University of Naples, 1973), 52–53.

85 Jean Gouillard, "Le Synodikon de L'Orthodoxie," *Travaux et mémoires* 2 (1967): 57–61. For a discussion of the trial and its context, see Lowell Clucas, *The Trial of John Italos and the Crisis of Intellectual Values in Byzantium in the Eleventh Century* (Munich: Institut für Byzantinistik, Neugriechische Philologie und Byzantinische Kunstgeschichte der Universität, 1981).

Meyendorff suggested that the Church condemned Italos because it feared he was attempting a new synthesis of Neoplatonism and Christianity, one that would replace the synthesis worked out by the Church Fathers. It was this fear that Meyendorff saw as the reason for the anathemas pronounced the first Sunday after Lent against people "who held that Plato's ideas had real existence" as well as against people "who devote themselves to secular studies not merely as an intellectual exercise but actually adopting the futile opinions" of pagan philosophers.[86] Yet it may not have been a new synthesis as such that Italos was attempting but specifically the application of dialectic to theological matters, which was enough to earn him approbation.

The trial of Italos established the precedent for a series of similar trials well into the twelfth century against other potential dialecticians. The historian Robert Browning (1914–1997) counted twenty-five such trials for "intellectual" heresy.[87] These included trials against the pupils of Italos, the monk Neilos, Eustratios of Nicaea, Michael of Thessalonika, Nikophoros Baseliakes, Soterichos Pantergenes, and other intellectual leaders. Indicative of this tendency is the fact that the successor to Psellos and Italos as *hypatos ton philosophon* was the undistinguished Theodore of Smyrna (ca. 1050–after 1112).[88] Much as one might scoff at the shrinking power of the Byzantine emperor from the eleventh century on, within his realm he controlled a state apparatus that was strong enough to suppress dissident movements. And the ecclesiastical and the temporal authorities were, at least in theory, in agreement on what constituted religious and political deviance.

If dialectic was not taught in middle Byzantium (or at least not taught in the formal manner that it was in Western Christendom), then its absence may have been crucial in Byzantium. Yet, there were lay schools in the Byzantine Empire (as in Italy) and the belief in education was strongly held in Byzantium, perhaps more strongly than in Western Europe at the time. The question of when dialectic became a formal part of the Byzantine curriculum is not an idle one, for, by the thirteenth century in the Western Church, *dialectica*, the handmaiden who, in Capella's words, "was devoted to deceitful trickery,"[89] had established itself as respectable. The evidence for this victory is profuse, but I will limit myself to one quotation from the secondary literature. According to the American historians Pearl Kibre (1900–1985) and Nancy G. Siraisi (1932–):

> Of the arts of the trivium, included in Paris under the new rubric of rational philosophy, only logic [dialectic] appears to have gained in scope and

86 John Meyendorff, *St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality*, trans. Adele Fiske ([Crestwood:] St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974), 98.

87 Robert Browning, "Enlightenment and Repression in Byzantium in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," *Past and Present* 69 (1975): 17–19.

88 Mango refers to him as a gourmand. Mango, *Byzantium*, 146. The author of the *Timarion* caricatures him as a faith healer. See Kazhdan and Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture*, 156.

89 *Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts*, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971–1977), vol. 2: *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury*, trans. William Harris Stahl and Richard Johnson, § 330.

prestige. It was victor in both the allegorical and the actual battle of the seven arts. ... Hugh of St. Victor had suggested that logic [dialectic] should come first among the seven liberal arts. ... And to this view was added the authority of such renowned thirteenth-century scholars and scientists as Robert Grosseteste [ca. 1175–1253], Bishop of Lincoln, prominent both at Oxford and Paris, and the two distinguished Dominican scholars, Albertus Magnus [ca. 1200–1280] and Thomas Aquinas. All three held that since the study of logic provided the method for all sciences it should be placed first.[90]

Indeed, the statutes of the University of Paris in 1215 gave predominance to dialectic over the other liberal arts.[91] But this "victory" was centuries in the making.

As early as the ninth century, Rabanus (Hrabanus) (ca. 780–856), a student of Alcuin, who nicknamed him Maurus,[92] sang the praises of dialectic:

It is the science of sciences (*disciplina disciplinarum*). It teaches us how to teach and teaches us how to learn. In dialectic, reason discovers and shows what it is, what it seeks, and what it sees. It alone is capable of knowing; it not only can, but will lead others to knowledge ... through it apprehend the origin and activity of the good, of the Creator and creature; it teaches us to discover the truth and to unmask falsehood; ... it shows us what is valid in argument and what is not; it teaches us to recognize what is contrary to the nature of things; it teaches us to distinguish in controversy the true, the probable, and the wholly false; by means of this discipline we are able to investigate everything with penetration, to determine its nature with certainty, and to discuss it with circumspection. Therefore, the clergy must understand this excellent art and constantly reflect upon its laws, in order that they may be able keenly to pierce the craftiness of heretics (*ut subtilem haereticorum*), and to refute their fatal fallacies.[93]

The teaching of dialectic had such a pervasive influence in the Western Church that it infiltrated the approach of many of those, like Lanfranc (1010–1089), founder of the school at Bec and archbishop of Canterbury from 1070 to 1089, Anselm (1033–1109), who was a student of Lanfranc and archbishop of Canterbury from 1093 to 1109, and Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1225–1274), the "Angelic Doctor," all of whom

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90 Pearl Kibre and Nancy G. Siraisi, "The Institutional Setting: The Universities," in *Science in the Middle Ages*, ed. David C. Lindberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 127.

91 *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, ed. Heinrich Denifle and Emile Chatelain, 4 vols. (Paris: Ex typis fratum Delalain, 1889–1897), 1:78–79 (no. 20).

92 See Stephen Allott, *Alcuin of York c. A.D. 732 to 804* (York: William Sessions, 1974), 139 (Letter 134).

93 Rabanus Maurus, "De dialectica," in Hrabanus Maurus, *De institutione clericorum libri tres*, ed. Detlev Zimpel (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996), 472–73. Translation based with modifications on Rabanus Maurus, "Education of the Clergy," in *Great Pedagogical Essays: Plato to Spencer*, trans. and ed. F. V. N. Painter (New York: American Book, 1905), 164.

defended the dominant theological view in the Church.[94] Indeed, Gerbert of Aurillac (945–1003), later Pope Sylvester II from 999 to 1003, has been credited with being the first instructor to teach the full introductory course of Aristotelian logic, based on his familiarity with Islamic commentaries and studies, as well as on Boethius, when he was assigned to the Rheims Cathedral school in 972.[95]

Whereas European kings and princes within their realms might rival the Byzantine emperor in degree of control, none governed a large enough area to suppress dissent throughout much of Europe. Instead, the governments in Western Christendom were so many links in a chain, with many weak links. These individual links often found themselves in opposition, or indifferent, to papal policy. While Henry I (r. 1031–1060) had joined in the condemnation of Berengar of Tours in the eleventh century (see below), neither Louis VI (r. 1108–1137) nor Louis VII (r. 1137–1180), who himself had been excommunicated, took part in the condemnation of Abelard in the twelfth century. In Paris, the analytical movement not only developed but flourished unconfined by papal or imperial repression. But then, we may ask, why did no "Abelard" develop in the outlying cities of the Byzantine Empire that were as distant from Constantinople as Paris is from Rome? Why did no such movement develop in Orthodox lands not directly under the political control of the Byzantine emperor, say in Bulgaria or in Kiev in the eleventh or twelfth centuries? And why did such a movement not occur in Novgorod, connected to the Hanseatic League and thus directly open to European influences until the end of the fifteenth century,[96] or even in Muscovy, where independent intellectual currents began stirring in the second half of the fifteenth century?

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94 On Lanfranc as logician, see R. W. Southern, "Lanfranc of Bec and Berengar of Tours," *Studies in Medieval History Presented to Frederick Maurice Powicke*, ed. R. W. Hunt, W. A. Pantin, and R. W. Southern (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1948), esp. p. 48. On Anselm's formulation of the role of reason, see *A Scholastic Miscellany: Anselm to Ockham*, ed. and trans. Eugene R. Fairweather, Library of Christian Classics, 10 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956), 101–2. MacDonald calls those like Lanfranc and Guitmund of Aversa who used dialectic to defend the consensus view "dialectical realists," a term that seems to be a bit of a misnomer. A. J. MacDonald, *Berengar and the Reform of Sacramental Doctrine* (London: Longmans, Green, 1930), 331.

95 H[ans] Liebeschütz, "Western Christian Thought from Boethius to Anselm," in *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 597.

96 The Rus' heresy may have been an analytic movement, but it was too small to have any impact and was suppressed in 1504. See, inter alia, Jana Howlett, "The Heresy of the Judaizers and the Problem of the Russian Reformation" (PhD dissertation, Oxford University, 1979); A. A. Zimin, *Rossia na rubezhe XV–XVI stoletii* (Moscow: Mysl', 1982), 82–92; Jakov S. Luria [Ia. S. Lur'e], "Unresolved Issues in the History of the Ideological Movements of the Late Fifteenth Century," in *Medieval Russian Culture*, ed. Henrik Birnbaum and Michael S. Flier (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 150–63; and Cesare G. De Michelis, *La Valdesia di Novgorod: "Giudaizzanti" e prima riforma (sec. XV)* (Torino: Claudiana, 1993). Although contemporary opponents claimed that the heresy came with the Jew Zacharia from Kiev, we do not have enough evidence to identify its point of origin. See Donald Ostrowski, "Unresolved Evidentiary Issues concerning Rus' Heretics of the Late Fifteenth–Early Sixteenth Centuries," in *Seeing Muscovy Anew: Politics—Institutions—Culture in Honor of Nancy Shields Kollmann*, ed. Michael Flier, Valerie Kivelson, Erika Monahan, and Daniel Rowland (Bloomington: Slavica, 2017), 123–39.

The absence of an "Abelard" in outlying cities of the Byzantine Empire can be explained by the form and structure of that empire wherein individuals felt they could follow a successful career only in the center, in Constantinople. Theophylakt of Ohrid (ca. 1050–ca. 1108) seems to have represented conventional wisdom when he saw his appointment as archbishop of Bulgaria to be an exile and a detrimental detour in his rising career until he could return to Constantinople.[97] "All the world is 10—and the City is 15" according to a Greek proverb,[98] which reflects the fact that Constantinople had remained for centuries the sole focus of high culture. And whatever seeped out to the provinces was sharply circumscribed. This limitation was due to the fact that the conduits for Byzantine culture were the monasteries, and the form and function of monasticism had developed differently in the Eastern and Western Churches.

In the Eastern Church, the primary and almost sole function of monasticism was the salvation of the soul of the individual monk. Eremetic monasticism predominated in the Eastern Mediterranean, and, even in those areas where communal monasteries developed, there was no concept of preserving writings other than those that were liturgical and scriptural in nature. As Mango has pointed out, we find, for example, no tradition of chronicle writing associated with Byzantine monasteries.[99] While a tradition of monastic chronicle writing did develop in Rus', and that tradition was influenced by secular Byzantine chronicles, there still was no Rus' tradition of pre-serving classical learning until Renaissance influence on Ruthenian lands via Poland occurred in the seventeenth century.[100] To be sure, beginning in the late fifteenth century, we find in Rus' territory translated tales with classical roots such as Trojan Tales and the *Serbian Alexandreid*, but that is not the kind of writing I am referring to. Compendia of sanitized pagan writings were copied, preserved, and taught from in the secular culture, but this method was hardly a basis for the development of analytical thinking. These compendia were for a different purpose. Byzantium, as the imitation (*mimesis*) of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, acted to maintain the purity of the written word and artistic form (e.g., strict rules for icon painting). In contrast to China, for example, where an idea or technological innovation from a province could find its way to the imperial capital and then be dispensed throughout the Empire, Constantinople for the most part dispensed but did not receive.

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97 *Social and Political Thought in Byzantium: From Justinian I to the Last Palaeologus*, ed. and trans. Ernest Barker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 145; A. A. Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire, 324–1453* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), 496; Dimitri Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe 500–1453* (London: Sphere Books, 1974), 284–85.

98 Karl Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur. Von Justinian bis zum Ende oströmischen Reiches, 527–1453*, 2nd ed. (Munich: Beck, 1897), 3.

99 Cyril Mango, "The Tradition of Byzantine Chronography," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 12/13 (1988/89): 362.

100 Frank Sysyn, "The Cultural, Social and Political Context of Ukrainian History-Writing: 1620–1690," *Europa Orientalis* 5 (1986): 285; and Frank Sysyn, "Concepts of Nationhood in Ukrainian History Writing, 1620–1690," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 10 (1986): 395–96.

In the Western Church, the development of monasticism coincided with the fall of the Roman Empire and, more importantly, was influenced by the perception of a Golden Age about to be lost. When Boethius's student Cassiodorus founded his monastery of Vivarium on his lands at Squillace in Calabria in southern Italy around the year 540, he helped establish the idea, along with the salvation of the soul of individual monks, of preserving the "salvation kit of Latinity" for a future, better time.[101] It might not be surprising, then, to discover that the Byzantine monasteries were the major lobbyists against John Italos and that Italos was sent to a monastery as part of his punishment, whereas Abelard sought refuge from the official Church in monasteries.[102] As a result of this difference in orientation of monasticism in the Eastern and Western Churches, Francis Thomson can argue that Rus' inherited not "the intellectual world of Byzantine culture, but the obscurantist world of Byzantine monasticism, which was largely hostile to secular learning."[103] Yet, it probably would have made little difference if Byzantine monasticism had been less "obscurantist" or less "hostile to secular learning," for the orientation of Byzantine monasticism was merely an outward manifestation of a deep structural difference in *mentalité* between the two Churches. That difference can be traced back to the different ways in which Neoplatonism was synthesized with Church dogma in Eastern and Western Christianity and their subsequently differing epistemologies.

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101 On Cassiodorus' role, see Reynolds and Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars*, 72–74. The phrase "salvation kit of Latinity" is A. G. Lehmann's in *The European Heritage: An Outline of Western Culture* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1984), 46. Significantly, Capella's *Marriage* was part of this kit.

102 Once there, however, Abelard seems to have alienated the monks too. He fled from St. Denis as the result of a dispute with the monks over Dionysios the Areopagite. Later on, he claims that when he became abbot of a monastery in Brittany, the monks tried to poison him. Peter Abelard, *The Story of His Misfortunes and Personal Letters*, trans. Betty Radice (London: Folio Society, 1977), 39–40, 52–53.

103 Thomson, "Nature of the Reception," 118.

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NEOPLATONISM, EAST AND WEST

Neoplatonism conceptualized the material world as emanating from the ultimate reality—the One—through the spheres of Divine Intellect and Divine Soul. This model viewed the One as a thing-unto-itself, unknowable except in a negative sense of what it was not (*apophasis*); posited a Divine Intellect, which emanated from the One and in which the ideal and eternal forms existed; and saw our souls as immortal and as connected to the Divine Soul, which acted as intermediary between the eternal forms in the Divine Intellect and the imperfect manifestations of those ideal forms in the material world. Wallis has stated that "a survey of Neoplatonism's influence threatens to become little less than a cultural history of Europe and the Near East down to the Renaissance, and on some points far beyond."[1] One of the reasons for this is that, in both the Eastern and Western Churches, the Neoplatonists, at least until the twelfth century, were studied more than Plato. In the Eastern Roman Empire, the writings of Plato were known directly to the scholars of the Neoplatonic Academies, but the Academy in Athens was closed down by the Emperor Justinian in 529 and the one in Alexandria was taken over by the Muslims in 641. In the Western Church, Plato was known in a direct way solely through Chalcidius's fourth-century translation of the *Timaeus*, the only one of Plato's works available in Latin until the twelfth century, and even that was incomplete. In contrast, the writings of Neoplatonists were known more or less widely in Western Christendom through Latin translation.

The American historian of philosophy R. Baine Harris (1927–2013) asserted that "Greek Christianity has always been more Neoplatonic than Latin Christianity

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[1] Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 160. Perhaps a major reason English philosopher and mathematician Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947) could characterize "the European philosophical tradition" as "a series of footnotes to Plato" is because of the influence of Neoplatonism. Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1929), 39.

[has]."[2] Harris attributed this difference to the influence of Origen (184/5–253/ 4), who, "[a]lthough he could not officially be labeled a Neoplatonist, … had quite similar views which also got into the thought of other important Greek Church Fathers such as the Cappadocians, Basil [of Caesarea], and the two Gregories [i.e., Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzos]—all of whom where [sic] taken seriously in Byzantine Christianity." It might not be a question of one being more Neoplatonic than the other but of the different amalgamations resulting from the different "flavours" of Neoplatonism. Plotinos attacked Aristotle's *Categories* in the sixth *Ennead*[3] and in general dismissed Aristotelian logic. But Porphyry, influenced by the rationality of the Stoics (as British historian of classical philosophy A. C. Lloyd [1916–1994] has indicated), saw a positive role for Aristotelian logic within Neoplatonism.[4] Through his translator and interpreter, Boethius, as well as through his own *Isagoge*, Porphyry's view of the relationship of Aristotle to Neoplatonism prevailed in Western Christendom. In Eastern Christendom, neither the philosopher Iamblichos, a student of Porphyry who helped introduce Neoplatonism into Syria, nor Proclos, who played a similar role in relation to Iamblichos as Boethius did in relation to Porphyry, was much influenced by Stoicism. As a result, and perhaps also as a result of the influence of thought from further east,[5] there occurred no rehabilitation of dialectical reasoning within the type of Neoplatonism that most influenced the Eastern Church.

Neoplatonism, in particular *The Enneads* (*The Nines*) of Plotinos, shared certain themes with Platonism. Harris has listed these shared themes:

> (1) belief in the immateriality of reality, (2) the conviction that the visible and sensible refer to a still higher level of being than the level on which they occur, (3) preference of intuition over empirical forms of knowing, (4) the affirmation of the immortality of the soul, (5) belief that the universe in its most real state is good, and can be known as good, and (6) the tendency to identify the beautiful, the good, and the true as one and the same.[6]

Neoplatonism also differed from Platonism in certain significant ways, including the assertion that it is impossible to say anything about what the One is, beyond that the One is Goodness, Truth, and Beauty. In fact, we can use only negative language about

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2 R. Baine Harris, "Brief Description of Neoplatonism," in *The Significance of Neoplatonism*, ed. R. Baine Harris (Norfolk, VA: International Society for Neoplatonic Studies, old Dominion University; Albany: State University of New York, 1976), 13.

3 Plotinos, *The Enneads*, esp. 471–74.

4 A[ntony] C[harles] Lloyd, "Neoplatonic Logic and Aristotelian Logic," *Phronesis: A Journal of Ancient Philosophy* 1 (1955): 58.

5 See, e.g., Hajime Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: India, China, Tibet, Japan*, rev. English trans., ed. Philip P. Wiener (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1964), 56–57; and Nakamura, *A Comparative History of Ideas*, rev. ed. (London: Kegan Paul International, 1986).

6 Harris, "Brief Description," 3.

the One—we can say only what it is not. Ultimately, however, we can comprehend only through the silence of mystical union.[7] MacCulloch remarked about the centrality of silence in both Western and Eastern Christianity, and attributed it in part to the "drawing from dialogues with Greeks, particularly Neoplatonists, whose discussion of the absent, silent God grew ever more radical" as well as "with the Asian religions to the east."[8]

This "silence of mystical union" with the One can be seen to coincide with the so-called "intellectual silence" of Rus' culture. It derives from the Byzantine blend of Christianity with Neoplatonism and entered Rus' through Eastern Church monasticism. As a result, communion with the divine is to be experienced, not thought or perceived. The prevailing view in both the Eastern and the Western Churches was that only those things that are created can be perceived by the senses. Therefore, the senses could not perceive the uncreated—that is, God. Those who asserted they could perceive God through the senses were suspect. The southern Italian theologian Barlaam of Calabria (1290–1348) in the fourteenth century hurled this criticism at the Hesychasts who claimed to see the light of the divinity (the light of Mount Tabor) by repeating the Jesus prayer while observing their navels. But the question dividing Barlaam from the Hesychasts was not, as is often asserted, whether knowledge is the result of inquiry (inference) or the result of vision (perception).[9] When Barlaam later became a Roman Catholic bishop, he rejected the analytical subcurrent of later Western theologians. He associated that subcurrent with Thomas Aquinas:

> Thomas and everyone who reasons as he does thinks that there is nothing inaccessible to the human mind; but we believe that this opinion comes from a soul of demoniacal and evil pride; for most divine things transcend human knowledge.[10]

Thus, Barlaam's reaction to Aquinas was similar to Bernard of Clairvaux's reaction to Abelard (see below). Barlaam doubted the efficacy of dialectic and syllogisms in theological matters.[11]

Gregory Palamas (1296–1360), the great champion of Hesychasm, may be the one responsible for the distorted representation of Barlaam's views. He, at first, in the view of Robert E. Sinkewicz, a scholar of Eastern Christian studies, mistook

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7 All this is well known and fairly well accepted. See, e.g., A. Hilary Armstrong, "Neo-Platonism," in *Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Studies of Selected Pivotal Ideas*, 5 vols., ed. Philip P. Wiener (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), 3:374–77.

8 MacCulloch, *Silence*, 221.

9 See, for example, Harry J. Magoulias, *Byzantine Christianity: Emperor, Church and the West* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1982), 82.

10 Quoted in Meyendorff, *St. Gregory Palamas*, 88 (from Paris Gr. Manuscript 1278, fol. 137).

11 On this point, see Robert E. Sinkewicz, "A New Interpretation for the First Episode in the Controversy between Barlaam the Calabrian and Gregory Palamas," *Journal of Theological Studies*, NS 31 (1980): 493–94; Barlaam Calabro, "Symbouleutikòs perì omonoías pros Rhōmaíous kaì Latínous Barlaam monachoū," in *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati*, 6 vols., ed. Ciro Giannelli (Studi e Testi 123, Città del Vaticano, 1946), 3:i.193.17–194.2; i.188.20–188.29; Calabro, "Pròs tēn sýnodon perì tēs pròs Latínous evōseōs," in *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati*, 3:ii.204.23–204.25.

what Barlaam said about the position of the Latins on the filioque as Barlaam's own position.[12] Then he attacked Barlaam for applying syllogistic arguments to matters of divine truth. As Sinkewicz pointed out, Barlaam used syllogistic arguments in only one of his *Antilatin Treatises*. In the others, he resorted to standard Eastern Church citation of Patristic literature to substantiate his views. Sinkewicz's point is that, because Barlaam had "noted that the Latins were in the habit of couching their arguments in syllogistic form," he "decided to open the question of the propriety of submitting divine truths to examination by Aristotelian logic."[13] Palamas thought Barlaam was ignoring Patristic literature and basing his discussion solely on syllogism, thus relying on "the hazardous tenets of Hellenic philosophy."[14] Palamas's opinion of pagan (Hellenic) philosophers well reflected the general attitude of the Eastern Church. For him, the pagan philosophers were snakes who had utility only in the event that "one kills them, and dissects them, and uses them with discernment as a remedy against their own bites."[15] One might say that Palamas thought it necessary to be aware of the methods of dialectic in order to know what to avoid and how to avoid it, whereas Barlaam was willing to use its methods to bite back and show the faultiness of dialectic in regard to divine matters. Thus, Palamas and Barlaam were in agreement in their opposition to those in the Western Church who used dialectic but were in disagreement over the means to defeat it.

Another issue that divided Palamas and Barlaam was the epistemological claims of the Hesychasts. Barlaam was not attacking Hesychasm from an analytical perspective, for, as Meyendorff wrote: "In his flight from the intellectual realism of Western Thomistic Scholasticism, Barlaam clashed with the mystical realism of the Eastern monks."[16]

The following five beliefs and practices appear in the mystical realist writings of Hesychasts like Nil Sorskii (ca. 1433–1508) as well as in those of the Sufis: (1) the importance of repeated prayer that invokes the divine name; (2) breath control; (3) the heart as an epistemological organ; (4) anti-philosophical views— that is, opposition to the intellect that is not contained within the heart;[17] and (5) the idea of being born again after degradation. Hesychasts expressed these ideas through a Christian medium, citing as authority the Bible and Patristic literature (i.e., divine writings) where appropriate. Sufis expressed them through an Islamic medium, citing as authority the Prophet, other Sufi writers, and,

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12 Sinkewicz, "A New Interpretation," 498.

13 Sinkewicz, "A New Interpretation," 500.

14 On the hostile attitude towards profane philosophy, see J. Gouillard, "Le Synodikon de l'Orthodoxie. Edition et commentaire," *Travaux et mémoires* 2 (1967): 56–61.

15 "Triade," I, 1, 11 in Gregory Palamas, *Défense des saints hésychastes*, 2 vols., ed. and trans. Jean [John] Meyendorff, Etudes et documents, vol. 30 (Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1959), 1:35–36.

16 Meyendorff, *St. Gregory Palamas*, 89.

17 On the "puzzling problem" of "the relationship of intellect and heart" in Nil's writings, see David Goldfrank, "Toward a Study of Nil Sorsky," in *Nil Sorsky: The Authentic Writings* (hereafter *NSAW*), ed. and trans. David M. Goldfrank (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 2008), 95–96.

sometimes, the Bible as well. Below I briefly discuss each of these parallel beliefs and practices in Hesychasm and Sufism. I then pose a few questions concerning the possible significance of these parallels in an attempt to better understand the context of the Hesychasm of such writers as Gregory Palamas and Nil Sorskii.[18]

Prayer of the Divine Name

Louis Gardet (1905–1986), a French Roman Catholic priest and scholar of Islam, has suggested that the Islamic tradition of *dhikr*—that is, repeated invocation of the name "Allah"—may have derived from a previous tradition of the Jesus prayer in the Byzantine Church.[19] Annemarie Schimmel (1922–2003), an expert on Islamic mysticism, pointed out that "[t]he Sufi practices of *dhikr* were founded upon a Koranic order, 'and recollect God often' (Sra 33:40), for, as another word attests, 'the recollection of God makes the heart calm' (Sra 13:28)."[20] Also, as the tenth-century Sufi mystic Ab Nar as-Sarrj stated: "The heart could be compared to Jesus, who was nurtured by Mary's milk, to which the *dhikr* corresponds."[21] John Meyendorff noted the similarity between the Jesus prayer, on the one side, and Hindu *Yoga*[22] and Islamic *dhikr*, on the other. Meyendorff also acknowledged that "[i]n the thirteenth century many personal contacts were made between Christian monks and Islam: texts such as lives of the saints or writings of Philotheus and Gregory Palamas provide numerous examples." Finally, he agreed that "no one can deny compenetration [between Islam and Christianity] of the two spiritual ways." Yet, in no uncertain terms, he rejected any further similarity between the two practices.[23] Nil Sorskii provides a typical Hesychastic description in his *Ustav* of the proper form of the Jesus prayer:

> it is proper to try to be silent in thought, even regarding urges considered right, and always gaze into the depths of our hearts,[24] saying: "Lord Jesus

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18 The following section draws on my article "Parallels of Mysticism: Sufism and the Hesychasm of Nil Sorskii," in *Nil Sorskii v kul'ture i knizhnosti drevnei Rusi*, ed. A. I. Alekseev et al. (St. Petersburg: Rossiiskaia natsional'naia biblioteka, 2008), 41–52.

19 Louis Gardet, "Un problème de mystique comparée: la mention du Nom divin (*dhikr*) dans la mystique musulmane," *Revue Thomiste*, 3 (1952): 642–79; 4 (1953): 197–216.

20 Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 167.

21 Abū Naṣr ʾAbd Allāh ibn ʾAlī Sarrāj, *The Kitáb al-luma' fi 'l-Taṣawwuf of Abú Naṣr ʾAbdallah b. ʾAlí al-Sarráj al-Ṭúsí*, ed. Reynold Alleyne Nicholson (Leiden: Brill, 1914), 116 (translation from Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 173).

22 Dupuche analyzed a section of the "The Method of Hesychastic Prayer," in which the method of navel watching is described (published in French translation by Irénée Hausherr, "La méthode d'oraison hésychaste," *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 36 [1927]: 164–65) as both a Hesychastic text and as a Yogic text and concluded that both readings worked equally as well. John R. Dupuche, "Yoga and Hesychasm," in *Orientale Lumen*, *Australasia/Oceania 2000, Proceedings, July 9–12, 2000*, ed. Lawrence Cross and Edward Morgan (Melbourne: Australian Catholic University, 2000), 69–80. Nonetheless, Palamas and Rus' Hesychasts did not follow the practice of navel watching.

23 Meyendorff, *St. Gregory Palamas*, 62.

24 Cf. Pseudo-Symeon, *Three Methods of Prayer*, in *Philokalia*, 4:71.

Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me"; all of it and sometimes only a part: "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy upon me," then alternating to "Son of God, have mercy on me," as this is simpler for neophytes, said Gregory the Sinaite. It is improper, he said, to alternate often, but in due time. Nowadays, the Fathers add a word: after they say: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me," they forthwith say: "a sinner." This is also appropriate, especially befitting us, the sinful.[25]

His description derives from that of Gregory of Sinai (1260s–1346).[26] The abbreviated form that Nil describes—"Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy upon me,"—gained wide circulation in the late nineteenth century with the publication of *Otkrovennye rasskazy strannika dukhovnomu svoemu ottsu* (*Candid Tales of a Pilgrim to his Spiritual Father*), published in Kazan' in Russian in 1884 (based on various monastic versions published between 1881 and 1883).[27] Subsequently, it gained even wider circulation when it was translated into German by Reinhold von Walter as *Ein Russicher Pilgrimleben* in 1925 and into English as *The Way of a Pilgrim* by Reginald Michael French in 1931.[28] Many of today's readers (such as myself) were probably introduced to the Jesus prayer (again in the short form) through J. D. Salinger's novel *Franny and Zooey*, in which it played a central role.[29]

Breath Control

The importance of the regulation of the breath was subscribed to not only by Sufis but also by certain groups of Buddhists and Hindus as well as the ancient Greeks. In more developed forms of *dhikr*, as described by Al-Khānqāh, "the breaths are counted; every breath that goes out without remembering Him is dead, but every breath that goes out in recollecting the Lord is alive and is connected with Him."[30] The idea of breath control, as Schimmel mentioned, appears among the Amida Buddhists with their repetition of the *Namu Amida Butsu* (Recollection of the

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25 *NSAW*, 138; *Nila Sorskogo Predanie i ustav*, ed. M. S. Borovkova-Maikova, in *Pamiatniki drevnei pis'mennosti i iskusstva* 179 (1912), 21–22.

26 For the description of the Jesus prayer by Gregory of Sinai, see his *Quomodo oporteat sedere hesychastam ad orationem nec cito assurgere*, in *PG*, 150:1329–30. For the Jesus prayer in the Philokalia, see Mary B. Cunningham, "The Place of the Jesus Prayer in the Philokalia," in *The Philokalia: A Classic Text of Orthodox Spirituality*, ed. Brock Bingaman and Bradley Nassif (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 195–202.

27 See Aleksei Pentkovsky, "Introduction: From 'A Seeker of Unceasing Prayer' to 'The Candid Tales of a Pilgrim' (Notes on the Textual History and Authorship of *The Pilgrim's Tale*)," in *The Pilgrim's Tale*, trans. T. Allen Smith (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1999), 1.

28 *Ein russisches Pilgerleben*, trans. Reinhold von Walter (Berlin: Petropolis, 1925); and *The Way of a Pilgrim*, trans. R. M. French (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1930).

29 J. D. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey* (Boston: Little Brown, 1961).

30 Al-Khnqh, *Guzda*, 53 (as cited and translated in Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 173).

Buddha).[31] And Jm, in speaking about the teachings of his own master, described it this way: "The purpose in *dhikr* is not to speak much; one says in one breath three times *La ilaha illa 'llah* ('There is no god but God'), beginning from the right side, and brings it down to the heart, and brings forth *Muammad rasl Allh* ('Muammad is the prophet of God') from the left side. A ninefold or eighteenfold repetition in one breath is also possible."[32]

In the Eastern Orthodox Church, in "Directions to Hesychasts," found in the *Philokalia* ("Love of Beauty"), the monks Kallistos and Ignatios write about the importance of breath control while reciting the Jesus prayer: "collect your mind from its customary circling and wandering outside, and quietly lead it into the heart by way of breathing, keeping this prayer: 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me!' connected with the breath," although they say nothing about counting.[33] Nil Sorskii emphasizes the importance of breathing in practising this mental prayer: "confine your intellect within your heart and hold your respiration as much as you can, so that you do not breathe often."[34] Further, in the same chapter of his monastic *Ustav* (*Rule*), Nil again connects the mind in the heart with controlled breathing:

> And you, if you see, he said, the uncleanness of wicked spirits, that is to say, urges, stirred up in your intellect, do not be horrified or amazed; even if some good conceptualizations of certain matters appear to you, pay no heed, but restrain your respiration as much as possible and confining your intellect within your heart. And instead of armament, summon the Lord Jesus often and assiduously, and they shall flee as if invisibly seared by the fire of the divine name.[35]

W. Norris Clarke (1915–2008), a Jesuit Thomist scholar, has suggested that views about controlled breathing expressed by Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (fl. ca. 500) may have been influenced by the Hindu concept of the *shakti*, or multiple divine energies, and found further elaboration in the theology of Gregory Palamas.[36] In addition, this concept, along with Buddhist concepts of proper

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31 Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 174.

32 Maulānā 'Abdurrāmān Jāmī, *Nafaāt al-uns*, ed. Mahdī Tawīdīpūr (Tehran: Sa'di, 1958).

33 Kallistos and Ignatios Xanthopoulon, *Methodus et regula cum deo accuratissima, PG*, 147:635–812, translation from Callistus and Ignatius of Xanthopoulos, "Directions to Hesychasts, in a Hundred Chapters," *Writings from the Philokalia on Prayer of the Heart*, trans. E. Kadloubovsky and G. E. H. Palmer (London: Faber & Faber, 1951), 195–96.

34 *NSAW*, 139; *Nila Sorskogo Predanie i ustav*, 23. According to Goldfrank, this passage is adapted from Gregory of Sinai, *De quietudine et duobus orationis*, in *PG*, 150:1316B.

35 *NSAW*, 139–40; *Nila Sorskogo Predanie i Ustav*, 22–23. Adapted from Gregory of Sinai, *Quomodo oporteat sedere hesychastam*, in *PG*, 150:1332D.

36 W[illiam] Norris Clarke, "The Problem of the Reality and Multiplicity of Divine Ideas in Christian Neoplatonism," in *Neoplatonism and Christian Thought*, ed. Dominic J. O'Meara (Norfolk, VA: International Society for Neoplatonic Studies; Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982), 121.

breathing and seeing the divine light, may also have had an impact on the development of the Palamite form of Hesychasm. The practice of navel watching is similar to and may have derived from the Hindu and Mahayana Buddhist practice of *dhyana*, or uninterrupted meditation on one point. Not all Hesychasts practiced navel watching or Tabor-light seeking. Gregory of Sinai did not prescribe focusing on one point while reciting the Jesus prayer or seeking the divine light:

> It is impossible in our generation to achieve essential spiritual contemplation of the light, to acquire a mind free from wanderings or dreams, the true action of prayer, surging continuously like a fountain from the depths of the heart, the resurrection and ascension of the soul on high, Divine awe, complete ecstasy in spirit, and an angelic rousing of the soul moved by God, since, through many temptations, we are governed nowadays by the tyranny of passions.[37]

Nor did Nil Sorskii, who was within the Gregory of Sinai branch of Hesychasm, prescribe focus on one point, as is clear from his description of when it was appropriate to recite the Jesus prayer: "And so speak diligently, be you standing, sitting, or lying down."[38] That is, the prayer should always be with you no matter what you are doing. Such a formulation is closer to the views of Celtic Christianity of the everyday intertwining of the sacred and the profane[39] than to the Tabor-light seeking of the Palamite Hesychasts.

The Heart as an Epistemological Organ

The question dividing the dialecticians from the Hesychasts was epistemological in nature and concerned whether knowledge is the result of inquiry or the result of vision. The dialecticians represented the approach of the analytical subcurrent of later Western theologians, while the Hesychasts were quite comfortably situated within the mystical outlook that prevailed throughout the Eastern Church. Gregory Palamas, the great champion of Hesychasm, explained: "Our holy faith is a vision of our hearts in a special way because it surpasses all the intelligible capabilities of our soul."[40] There is no contradiction here between understanding through the soul and

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37 Gregory of Sinai, *Capita valde utilia per acrostichidem*, in *PG*, 150:1281–82 (translation from Gregory of Sinai, "Texts on Commandments and Dogmas," in *Writings from the Philokalia*, 64–65).
38 *NSAW*, 139; *Nila Sorskogo Predanie i Ustav*, 22.
39 See, e.g., the hymn or poem "The Breastplate of St. Patrick" (also known as "The Deer's Cry," associated with St. Patrick's and his disciples' hiding from the pagans), in part reads: "Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, / Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, / Christ on my right, Christ on [51] my left, / Christ when I lie down, / Christ when I sit down, / Christ when I arise, / Christ in the heart of every one who thinks of me, / Christ in the mouth of every one who speaks of me, / Christ in the eye that sees me, / Christ in every ear that hears me." Quoted in Christopher Bamford and William Parker Marsh, *Celtic Christianity: Ecology and Holiness* (Edinburgh: Floris Books, 1986), 48–49.
40 Gregory Palamas, *Antirrhetici libri XII: Contra Gregoram*, in *PG*, 151:1117–22, translation from Magoulias, *Byzantine Christianity*, 83.

understanding through the heart. The heart is seen not as different from the soul, but as the very centre of the soul.[41]

This formulation, among other teachings of the Hesychasts, may have been what Barlaam had in mind when he attacked as "monstrosities" their "ridiculous doctrines not even worthy of mention by one of sound mind or understanding—products of mistaken doctrines and reckless fantasy." For among their teachings "of certain wondrous disjunctions and reunions of the mind with the soul," he points specifically to their claim of "the union of our Lord with the soul, which occurs perceptibly within the navel and with full conviction of our heart."[42] The idea of union with the divine is typical of both Hesychasm and Sufism. For example, the Sufi Abu Sa'id Abel-Kayr wrote: "Sufism is the heart standing with God, with nothing in between."[43] Nil's formulation is thus: "To have this under control in our life is always to abide as much as one can in God's work, and in all aspects in every undertaking, with soul and body, word and deed, and thoughts."[44] And elsewhere Nil alludes to Matthew 23:26 and John 4:23[45] when he writes: "to clean the insides of the vessel, and [God] said, 'In spirit and truth it is proper to worship the Father.' "[46]

The Czech Jesuit Tomáš Špidlík (1919–2010) attributed to Thomas Aquinas the distinction between heart and mind, although that distinction had apparently developed earlier in the Western Church theology. Modern colloquial English maintains the idea of the heart as the organ of knowing in the expression "to learn by heart." This expression was used by Chaucer as early as 1374, but it ultimately derives from the ancient Romans (see also "record" [< *re* (again) + *cor* (heart)]). This idea is one of the similarities between Hesychasm and Sufism (see below). In turn, Sufism may have been responsible for, and influenced, the development of Hesychasm in the Eastern Church.

After the Muslim capture of the Alexandrian Academy in 640, Neoplatonic epistemology may have influenced Sufism in its idea that the infant is born with knowledge of God. A Sufi has been described as one who has God in the forefront of the mind at all times, as indicated by internal repetitive saying of the first part of the *shahada*—"La ilaha illa 'llah"—and in frequently beginning statements with the phrase *bismallah* ("In the name of God"). Such constant repetition of a sacred formula, to the point that it becomes subconscious, correlates with Nil's understanding

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41 For a discussion of the heart as an epistemological organ, see Tomáš Špidlík, SJ, "The Heart in Russian Spirituality," *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 195 (1973): 361–79.

42 Letter V to Ignatius, ed. Giuseppe Shirò, *Barlaam Calabro: Epistole greche. I primordi episodici e dottrinari delle lotte esicaste* (Palermo: Istituto Siciliano di Studi Bizantini e Neogreci, 1954) (= Testi e Monumenti. Testi 1), 323–24.

43 Quoted in Javad Nurbakhsh, *Sufism: Meaning, Knowledge and Unity* (New York: Khaniqahi-Nimatullahi Publications, 1981), 21.

44 *NSAW*, 158; *Nila Sorskogo Predanie i Ustav*, 36.

45 The Revised Standard Version of the Bible is used throughout.

46 *NSAW*, 126; *Nila Sorskogo Predanie i Ustav*, 11. According to Goldfrank, the part about cleaning the insides of the vessel is adapted from a combination of Nicephoros Monachos, *On Watchfulness* and Pseudo-Symeon the New Theologian, *Three Methods of Prayer*. The second part of the quotation is from John 4:23–24.

of the purpose of the Jesus prayer—that is, "with God's help" to drive off unto-ward urges "by remembrance of God" (памятию Божиею),[47] not to experience the divine light.

For Sufis, God is both external and internal—"closer than the jugular vein," for which phrase they cite sūra 50 verse 18 of the Qūr'an. This is a formulation that Nil Sorskii, Gregory of Sinai, and other Hesychasts in that tradition would fully support. For example, Gregory of Sinai wrote: "How shall a man discover, or rather himself be discovered by, the One whom he possesses and has received through Baptism in the Spirit, even Christ? As the Apostle says, 'Do you not know that Christ Jesus dwells in your hearts?' "[48] Gregory is referring to Ephesians 3:17: "and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith." But his formulation is just different enough from the Pauline passage to indicate a different understanding. In Paul's Epistle, he hopes the Ephesians will obtain Christ. But in Gregory's use of the concept, the divinity already exists in our hearts, which is more in accord with the Neoplatonic epistemology that both Hesychasts and Sufis accepted.

The Sufi scholar Ibn al-'Arabi (1165–1240), in his *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (*Bezels of Wisdom*), wrote: "Jesus said to the children of Israel, 'O Children of Israel, every man's heart is where his wealth is. Let, therefore, your wealth be in heaven so that your hearts may be there also.' "[49] 'Arabi's reference here is to Matthew 6:19–21: [46]:

> Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and worm con-sume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor worm consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Nil Sorskii cites Matthew 5:40 ("If anyone would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well") in a similar context.[50] He also has a number of formulations that are similar, such as:

> And to have the title of the finest monastery in a place and a multitude of brothers—this is the pride of the worldly, the Fathers said—or, according to the prevailing custom now, from the acquisition of villages and accumulation of many properties, and from success in worldly reputation.[51]

Such formulations are closer to the ethics of the Gospels than much of the promising of worldly success by subsequent Christian Church leaders.[52]

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47   *NSAW*, 137; *Nila Sorskogo Predanie i Ustav*, 21.

48   *De quiete et oratione*, 1–2 (1305 AD), translation from Kallistos Ware, "The Jesus Prayer of St. Gregory of Sinai," *Eastern Churches Review* 4 (1972): 9.

49   Ibn al-'Arabi, *The Bezels of Wisdom*, trans. R. W. J. Austin (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), 244.

50   *NSAW*, 118; *Nila Sorskogo Predanie i Ustav*, 6.

51   *NSAW*, 186–87; *Nila Sorskogo Predanie i Ustav*, 59.

52   See, e.g., the letter from June 1370 of Patriarch of Constantinople Philotheus (r. 1353–1354 and 1364–1376) to the princes of all Rus' promising that if they support Metropolitan of Kiev and All Rus' Aleksei (r. 1354–1378), God "will grant you increase of power, long life, abundance of riches, success in all good things, untroubled, painless existence and bodily health." *Acta*

Anti-Philosophy (Against the Mind That Is Not within the Heart)

Schimmel pointed out that "the main target of Sufi criticism was philosophy, influenced by Greek thought: 'There is nobody more distant from the law of the Hashimite prophet than a philosopher' … says 'A, echoing San''s sentiments when he wrote: 'From words like "primary matter" and "primary cause" you will not find the way into the Presence of the Lord.' "[53] Likewise, Nil Sorskii wrote to the Russian monk, former boyar Vassian Patrikeev (ca. 1470–after 1531), in this vein, warning him about the snares of worldly knowledge and comforts:

> Place your thought firmly within what is said: How has the world profited those who cling to it? If they had any glory and honor and riches, hasn't all of this become nothing, and passed like a shadow [Wisdom 2:2–5], and disappeared like smoke? [LXX Psalms 101:12, 4]. And many of them, who inter-communed within the things of this world and loved its course, were at the time of youth and prosperity, harvested by death, like the flowers of the fields, having bloomed, fallen off, [LXX Psalms 102:15–16] … And when they sojourned in this world, they did not know its foul stench, but strove for beauty and physical comfort, finding knowledge applicable for the profits of this world, and they passed through the teachings that crown the body in this passing age. And if they received all of this, but did not care about infinite bliss, what can one think of them? The world has nothing more insane than them, as a certain wise saint said.[54]

Nil here is using allusions to Wisdom and the Psalms to support an argument of anti-philosophy. Both the Hesychasts and the Sufis believed that those who gave their time and effort over to articulating clever academic formulations and to becoming experts in dead philosophies were well on the road towards losing their souls. An irony here is that both Hesychasts and Sufis are heavily indebted to Neoplatonic epistemology, which Church Fathers like Augustine of Hippo worked hard to amalgamate with the teachings of the Gospels.

Being Born Again after Degradation

Finally, the French scholar of Islamic philosophy Henry Corbin (1903–1978) has pointed out that "all the spirituals of Islam knew and meditated upon" John 3:3—that is, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."[55] Nil Sorskii

et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana, 6 vols., ed. Fr[anz] von Ritter Miklosich and Ios[if] Müller (Vienna: C. Gerold, 1860–1890) 1:521–22, no. 266 and *Russkaia istoricheskaia biblioteka*, vol. 6, Prilozhenie, no. 18, cols. 109–14. English translation in John Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia: A Study of Byzantino-Russian Relations in the Fourteenth Century* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989), 283–84.

53 Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 18–19.

54 *NSAW*, 232; Nil Sorskii, "Poslanie startsa Nila k bratu, v prosivshemu ego o pomyslekh," in G. M. Prokhorov, "Poslanie Nila Sorskogo," *Trudy Otdela drevnerusskoi literatury* 29 (1974): 136.

55 Henry Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, trans. Liadan Sherrard with the assistance of Philip Sherrard (London: Kegan Paul International, 1993).

did not cite this particular passage, but he invoked the idea through quoting Gregory of Sinai:

> Unless a man be forsaken, defeated and subjugated, enthralled by every passion, by urge and spirit defeated, and not finding help from his deeds, or from God, or from anything else at all, so that he soon will come into despair, violated in every way, he cannot be contrite and regard himself below everyone, even the last of slaves, worse than the demons themselves as one completed violated and defeated. And this is Providence's dispensational and chastising humility, by which a second and superior thing is given by God, namely, divine power, operating and accomplishing all things—on account of which one always sees oneself as his vessel, and on this account working God's miracles.[56]

This idea of being born again after degradation corresponds closely to the central experience of Christianity; that is, the suffering, tormented and tortured Christ who dies on the cross and who, on the third day, rises from the dead and ascends into heaven.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

If one concludes that the above-listed parallels do not indicate a direct or indirect connection between Sufism and Hesychasm, then we have to consider other possibilities for the similarities. I think we can rule out pure coincidence as an explanation for these concepts appearing in both traditions. Instead, one possibility we have to consider is that the similarity between the doctrines of Christianity and of Islam led independently to parallel developments in their respective prominent mystical traditions. I might also suggest that rather than perceiving Hesychasm and Sufism as extreme versions of their respective religions, we could think of Hesychasm and Sufism as part of the mainstream of these essentially mystical religions, Christianity and Islam respectively. Although the derivation of the word *Sufism* is in doubt, the derivation of *Hesychasm* is not. It derives from the Greek word ἡσυχία meaning "quiet" or "silence." But then can an independent development of the similarity of their beliefs and practices be attributed solely to their common roots in Judaism, the Gospels, and the influence of Neoplatonism?

If one concludes, instead, that the above-listed parallels allow the possibility of direct or indirect connection between Sufism and Hesychasm, then one needs to consider how that may have occurred and the exact nature of that connection. Hesychasm as a theological system combined various spiritual components already within the Eastern Church tradition into a coherent unified system. The impetus as well as the model for doing so may not have been an entirely indigenous Christian one. Over the centuries, the Eastern Church and Islam engaged in an interactive borrowing from each other—a synergy, if you will. We might suspect this to be the

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56 *NSAW*, 156; *Nila Sorskogo Predanie i Ustav*, 35. According to Goldfrank, the passage is from Gregory of Sinai, *Capita valde utilia per acrostichidem*, 117:240 in *PG*, 150:1281C–D.

case anyway merely from their close geographical proximity. But we have more direct evidence of this synergy. Islam adopted Christian Neoplatonic views after it took over the Academy in Alexandria in 640.[57] The Muslim method of worship with prostrations, as well as prayer niches (*mihrab*) and fasts, seems to have been adopted from early Syrian Christian practices.[58] The Eastern Church, for its part, eliminated statuary and applied strict rules to icon painting as the result of the struggle over Iconoclasm in the Byzantine Empire during the eighth and ninth centuries. This struggle, in turn, was most likely the result of the contact with Islamic prohibition against religious representations of people and animals, as well as the influence that prohibition may have had on the Iconoclasts and the subsequent reaction of the Iconodules to that influence.[59] At the same time, individuals within each religion were emphatically denying they were doing so (for to admit such would leave one open to charges of heresy); they borrowed ideas and practices from the other religion and adapted them to their own religious doctrines.

If Sufism influenced the development of Hesychasm, then one might begin looking for the mechanism of that influence. An obvious person to study in this regard is Gregory of Sinai.[60] As a young man in the late thirteenth century in Anatolia, he and the men of his family were captured by the Seljuk Turks to be sold into slavery. They were ransomed by Christians of Laodicea. After spending some time in Cyprus where he took the lesser schema of a novice monk, he went to St. Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai, where he took the great schema of a full monk. At St. Catherine's he may have become familiar with the teachings of the mystic Nikephoros, who lived there two centuries earlier. Subsequently Gregory traveled to Crete, where Arsenios the monk is credited with teaching Gregory the art of prayer. After leaving Crete, Gregory went to Mount Athos, Constantinople, and Thrace.[61]

This brief sketch of his life suggests a particular time when Gregory could have come in more or less direct contact with Sufism (i.e., during his period of captivity by the Seljuk Turks), but it could have occurred at any time during his youth since he grew up in lands that were predominantly Muslim. If so, then the particular Christian form that the Sufi-inspired Hesychasm took would have been informed by Gregory's stay at St. Catherine's and with the monk Arsenios on Crete. In turn,

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57 On Neoplatonism in Islamic thought, see, inter alia, Netton, *Muslim Neoplatonists*.
58 For the earlier Syrian Christian practice, see John Moschos, *The Spiritual Meadow* (*Patrum Spirituale*), trans. John Wortley (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1992), 154–55. The same techniques of prayer were still (as of 1997) being practiced by the Christian worshippers of the Monastery of Mar Gabriel (in eastern Turkey near the border with Syria). William Dalrymple, *From the Holy Mountain: A Journey among the Christians of the Middle East* (New York: Henry Holt, 1997), 105; cf. 304.
59 For a discussion of possible influences on Iconoclasm, see J. M. Hussey, *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 34–36.
60 Cf. Gardet, "Un problème de mystique comparée," 645n4; Hausherr, "La méthode d'oraison hésychaste," 132; John R. Dupuche, "Sufism and Hesychasm," in *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, 6 vols., ed. Pauline Allen et al., vol. 3: *Liturgy and Life* (Everton Park: Centre for Early Christian Studies, Australian Catholic University, 2003), 343.
61 Kallistos, *Zhitie i deiatel'nost' izhe bo sviatykh ottsa nashego Grigoriia Sinaita*, ed. and trans. Hans-Veit Beyer (Ekaterinburg: Izdatel'stvo Ural'skogo universiteta, 2006).

Gregory's writings laid the basis for the Hesychasm that Nil espoused. Whether or not one thinks there was synergy, compenetration, out-and-out direct borrowing or merely independent parallel developments between Sufism and Hesychasm, it nonetheless may be worthwhile to be informed of comparable practices and beliefs in Sufism in order better to understand the Russian brand of Hesychasm.

The issue in question is an epistemological one. According to Neoplatonism, aspects of the Divine Soul are in each one of us, in our own souls. The Neoplatonists believed that the world in which we live is on the edge of non-existence. For them, humans are imperfect; we have many flaws, and our physical world is constantly changing. But each individual has a connection with the Divine Soul (i.e., with the eternal), because there is a part of the Divine Soul within everyone. Like fingers on a hand, individuals' souls are separate from each other but connected with the palm of the Divine Soul. When Christian writers of the third and fourth centuries took over this concept, it was very easy for them to place God in the position of the One. Thus, the Divine Intellect, or Mind of God, emanates from God, while the Divine Soul still acts as an intermediary between the Mind of God and the world in which we live and the body we occupy. In this view, each person can have an understanding of the Divine Soul through their own soul. But no one can have an understanding of the Divine Soul through the material world in which everyone lives, because that world is a world of illusion and deception, of change and mutation. The imperfections of this world thus lead us astray. Humans do not really learn from the experience of this world. What the experience of this world does is unlock or lay bare the understanding of forms that everyone is born with, that is, that which already exists in each person's soul. Such is Neoplatonic epistemology, which predominated in the West, at least, until the Enlightenment, and among some thinkers even later.[62]

The visible manifestation of the mysticism of the Eastern Church in having part of the Mass take place in the sanctuary behind the iconostasis can be understood to derive from a more explicit implementation of the mystery of God. Not only can we not have any positive knowledge of God, but also any knowledge of the Mind of God that we might obtain through the Divine Soul is only partial and imperfect. Salvation occurs only through our own souls for our own souls. From the point of view of the Eastern Church, the West has been regressing from concern for salvation of the soul. An Eastern Church theologian might have the view that, just as we in the West have polluted the earth and threatened to destroy our terrestrial home with our progress, so, too, we have polluted our souls. "For what does it profit a man if he gains the world but loses his soul?" (Mark 8:36; Matthew 16:26).[63]

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62 See, e.g., the Unitarian minister William Ellery Channing (1780–1842), who, in the nineteenth century, was a forerunner of the Transcendentalists, and argued that our knowledge derives from "our own soul." See William Ellery Channing, "Likeness to God," in *The Transcendentalists: An Anthology*, ed. Perry Miller (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950), 23.

63 The word for "soul" is ψυχή, which is the same word as Plotinos used to refer to the Divine Soul. It may be significant that the RSV translates ψυχή as "life," which seems to be closer to

Prop. XCIX

Principles.
——

Imparticipable
Natures
are
Unbegotten.
——

All Imparticipables
eminate from the one.
————

The One
Imparticipable

Imparticipable Being

Imparticipable Life

Intellect

Soul

Body

The One,
Imparticipable
Superessential
Supervital
Superintellectual
Imparticipable Being.
Being ⎫
Life ⎬ Essentially.
Intellect ⎭
——
Imparticipable Life.
Being ⎫
Life ⎬ Vitally.
Intellect ⎭
Imparticipable Intellect
Being ⎫
Life ⎬ Intellectually.
Intellect ⎭
——
Imparticipable Soul.
Being ⎫
Life ⎬ Psychically.
Intellect ⎭
——
Imparticipable Body.
Being ⎫
Life ⎬ Supernally.
Intellect ⎭

**Figure 4: D. E. Wagenhals's geometric representation of Proposition 99
of Proclus's *Metaphysical Elements.*
Source: Proclus, *Metaphysical Elements*, 199.**

Likewise, so this line of reasoning continues, since this world, the material world in which we live, is imperfect and deceptive, and since all of truth has already been revealed through the Bible, the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils, and the writings of the Church Fathers, clearly there is no need for so-called Western values or what we might call the analytical approach to acquire new truths. Simply, there are no new truths to be determined. And anyone who says they have new truths can only be trying to get you to replace the real (old) truths with new falsehoods.[64] This is why, among other reasons, the fourth-century *Apostolic Constitutions* urges Christians to read only the Bible:

> Avoid all gentile books. For what need have you of alien writings, and laws and false prophets that lead the frivolous away from the faith? What do you find lacking in God's Law that you should seek those gentile fables? If you wish to read histories, you have the books of Kings; if rhetorical and poetic writings, you have the Prophets, you have Job, you have the Proverbs, wherein you will find a wisdom that is greater than that of all poetry and sophistry, since those are the words of our Lord who alone is wise. If you have a desire for songs, you have the Psalms; if for ancient genealogies, you

the first-century meaning of the term, but which clearly departs from the Neoplatonist use of the word.

64 Cyril Gordon pointed out a similar phenomenon encountered by those who attempt to innovate: "The very fact that it is an innovation means that it is not in keeping with the consensus of opinion. Politically astute people never buck consensus. Crusaders for the truth will buck it (and afterwards pay the price)." Cyril Gordon, *Riddles in History* (New York: Crown, 1974), 156. Or, as Mark Twain wrote: "A man with a new idea is a Crank until the idea succeeds." Mark Twain, *Following the Equator: A Journey Around the World*, 1897, vol. 1, chap. 32.

have Genesis; if for legal books and precepts, you have the Lord's glorious Law. So avoid strenuously all alien and diabolical books.[65]

The *Izbornik of 1076*, likewise, commends the reading of Scripture "especially for every Christian."[66] Such a recommendation differs from the Catholic Church's admonition that the Bible should be read only with proper guidance, that is, of priests, so that the reader is not led astray.[67] And Klim Smoliatich, metropolitan of Rus' from 1147 to 1155, felt obliged to defend himself in writing against the accusation of a certain Foma that he "had abandoned the revered Scriptures and had instead written using Homer and Aristotle and Plato."[68]

Christian Neoplatonism was reinforced in, and modified for, the Western European medieval tradition through the writings of Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysios the Areopagite (end of the fifth century), and, among others, John Scotus Eriugena (ca. 810–ca. 877).[69] It became the dominant trend within that tradition, but not to the exclusion of other approaches. These other approaches had to challenge the dominant mystical outlook within the confines of the Neoplatonist framework. In Byzantium, the synthesis that Augustine helped forge and even the writings of Augustine himself were little followed or even known.[70] The German Catholic Church historian Berthold Altaner (1885–1964) wrote concerning

how appalling the intellectual isolation of the linguistically differentiated Greek East and Latin West really was. No Greek theologian or hierarchy from the fifth

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Gordon goes on to add: "The question that matters is not 'Does the majority like it?' but 'Does the innovation follow from the primary facts?' " Gordon's formulation well represents Western analytic ideals, although practice is often different. For example, in scholarly circles the idea of "the majority of historians believe," or some variant, is often invoked as a formulation for what the reader should believe.

65 *Constitutiones apostolorum*, VI. 1–3, in *Didascalia et Constitutiones apostolorum*, 2 vols., ed. Francis Xaver Funk (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schoeningh, 1905), 1:13–15.

66 *The Izbornik of 1076*, trans. William R. Veder in *The Edificatory Prose of Kievan Rus'*, Harvard Library of Early Ukrainian Literature. English Translations, vol. 6 (Cambridge, MA: Ukrainian Research Institute of Harvard University, 1994), 3.

67 Cardinal Gasquet at the end of the nineteenth century advanced the argument that the Catholic Church supported Bible-reading in the vernacular during the pre-Reformation period. Francis Aidan Gasquet, *The Old English Bible: And Other Essays* (London: John C. Nimmo, 1897), 160–63. But a huge body of scholarly literature has shown the hostility with which Church leaders met attempts at lay Bible-reading. On this point, see David Sandler Berkowitz, *In the Remembrance of Creation: Evolution of Art and Scholarship in the Medieval and Renaissance Bible* (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 1968), 46.

68 Khrisanf M. Loparev, ed., "Poslanie Mitropolita Klimenta k smolenskomu presviteru Fome. Neizdannyi pamiatnik literatury XII veka," *Pamiatniki drevnei pis'mennosti i iskusstva* 90 (1892): 13. English translation in *Sermons and Rhetoric of Kievan Rus'*, trans. Simon Franklin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Library of Early Ukrainian Literature, English translations, vol. 5, 1991), 31.

69 Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 161.

70 Josef Lössl, "Augustine in Byzantium," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 51 (2000): 271: "some of Augustine's more daring original conclusions, especially in the field of the psychological Trinity, were later rejected in the east." Aidan Nichols, "The Reception of St. Augustine and His Work in the Byzantine-Slav Tradition," *Angelicum* 64 (1987): 437–52.

to the ninth centuries had even the most modest claim to an adequate acquaintance with the writings and theology of the great Augustine. If somewhere or other in the literature of the Greek church the name of the greatest Western theologian is mentioned, or we come across a citation from his writings, this in no case implies a serious study of the works of the bishop of Hippo. It must be finally stated that the life and work of Augustine constituted for the Greek church a scroll sealed with seven seals.[71]

In part, this absence of interest in Augustine's views in Byzantium, according to Josef Lössl, historian of early Church history and patristics, was the result in part of the Byzantine lack of interest in Latin studies.[72] Not until the thirteenth century were his treatises begun to be translated in Greek.[73] One of the translators, Prochoros Kydones (ca. 1330–1369) also translated works of Boethius and helped his brother Demetrios Kydones (1324–1398) translate the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas. The Council of Constantinople of 1389 condemned both brothers as heretics. Lössl contended that "Prochoros's association with such ideas raised the suspicion of his fellow monks" and that "[w]hen Prochoros discussed some of the theological problems he [Palamas] has left behind he [Prochoros] was accused of heresy."[74] Such an atmosphere was not conducive to the study of one of the Western Church's great analytical thinkers.

Not all scholars, however, would agree with the role that Augustine played in the Western Church. The Anglican clergyman and church historian Charles Bigg (1840–1908), for example, argued that Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150–213) was the one who gave birth to Neoplatonism.[75] Later, however, in the same work he hedged on that conclusion: "Numenius may not unfairly be regarded as the founder of Neo-Platonism, with the reservation already pointed out in favour of Clement."[76] And the British historian of philosophy W. T. Jones (1910–1998) stated that "Neoplatonic metaphysics and Christian orthodoxy are in many respects deeply antagonistic. Indeed, they are so far apart that it is unthinkable, but for the mistaken belief that the Pseudo-Dionysios was the divinely inspired convert of St. Paul, that John [Scotus Eriugena] or anyone else could have supposed they could be combined." Furthermore, Jones asserted that Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysios, and "other Christian writers [were only] tinged in varying degrees with Neoplatonism."[77]

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71 Berthold Altaner, "Augustinus in der griechischen Kirche bis auf Photius," in his *Kleine patristische Schriften*, ed. Günter Glockmann (Berlin: Akademie, 1967), 98. Translation based on that in Nichols, "The Reception of St. Augustine," 443.

72 Lössl, "Augustine in Byzantium," 275.

73 Lawrence Schrenk, "Augustine's *De trinitae* in Byzantine Skepticism," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 30 (1989): 451; E. Dekkers, "Les traductions grecques des écrits patristiques latins," *Sacris Erudiri* 5 (1953): 193–233.

74 Lössl, "Augustine in Byzantium," 290.

75 Charles Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1886), 64.

76 Bigg, *Christian Platonists*, 253.

77 W. T. Jones, *A History of Western Philosophy*, 3 vols. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1952), 1:421, 422. See also Claude Tresmontant, *La Métaphysique du Christianisme*

It hardly seems likely, though, that Christian acceptance of the Neoplatonic framework depended solely on a "mistaken belief" in a forgery. The Dionysian Corpus (*Corpus Areopagiticum*) was attributed to Dionysios, a first-century AD member of the Athenian Areopagus, who was converted by Paul (Acts 17:34). Instead, the corpus of works was most likely written in Syria sometime between the late fifth century and 532 (the first definite mention of it). Although doubts in its authenticity had been expressed since the early sixth century, the defenders of it carried the day. Yet, doubts continued to be expressed over the centuries, including by Peter Abelard and Thomas Aquinas, until the German Jesuit Joseph Stiglmayr (1851–1934) and the German Catholic theologian and Church historian Hugo Koch (1869–1940) showed in 1895 the dependence of the *Corpus Areogapiticum* on the writings of the fifth-century Neoplatonist philosopher Proclos.[78] Its popularity and the willingness of so many to consider it authentically apostolic was due to its fitting into and expressing so well an already-arrived-at position among Christian theologians—the amalgamation of Neoplatonism with Christian theology.

Instead, Neoplatonism had a number of important concepts in common with early Christianity, enough so as to allow easy correspondence between them, which in turn enhanced the significance of these concepts for subsequent Christian theology. For example, they both agreed on the unimportance of this world relative to the next ("My kingdom is not of this world" [John 18:36]); the concept of the Trinity conforms to Neoplatonism's three hypostases; and the dragon of Revelations (12:7; 19:11–21), that is, the Satan of the New Testament, was associated with the material world—the devil tempts Jesus in the desert with things of this world (Matthew 4:1–11; Luke 4:1–13).

Jones's view reflects the anti-Neoplatonic attitudes expressed in early Christian sources, and, in that sense, he may be confined by the attitudes of his sources. For example, in 426, Augustine wrote that he regretted his previous commendation of Neoplatonism: "I have been rightly displeased, too, with the praise with which I extolled Plato or the Platonists or the Academic philosophers beyond what was proper for such irreligious men, especially those against whose great errors Christian teaching must be defended."[79] Pagan Neoplatonists and early Christian writers

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et la naissance de la philosophie chrétienne (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1961), who argued that the Fathers defended an already existing Christian philosophy against Hellenistic (read: Neoplatonic) thought.

78 Joseph Stiglmayr, "Der Neuplatoniker Proclus als Vorlage des sogenannten Dionysius Areopagita in der Lehre vom Übel," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 16 (1895): 253–73, 721–48; Stiglmayr, *Das Aufkommen der Pseudo-Dionysischen Schriften und ihr Eindringen in die Christliche Literatur bis zum Literanconcil 649: Ein zweiter Beitrag zur Dionysios-Frage* (Feldkirch: Im Selbstverlage der Anstalt—Druck von L. Sausgruber, 1895); Hugo Koch, "Der pseudepigraphische Charakter der dionysischen Schriften," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 77 (Tübingen, 1895): 353–420; Koch, "Proklus, als Quelle des Pseudo-Dionysius, Areop. in der Lehrer vom Bosen," *Philologus* 54 (1895): 438–54.

79 Augustine, *The Retractions*, trans. M[ary] Inez Bogan (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1968), 10. See also Paul Shorey, *Platonism: Ancient and Modern* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1938), 79–80 for a brief description of what Church Fathers approved and disapproved of in Plato.

carried on a polemic for at least two hundred years. One of the characteristics of the resulting synthesis is the absence of a supernatural Devil or Satan as the source of evil in Christian theological formulations, even while the concept of Satan continues to exist, in parallel, at the popular religious level as well as among Manichean groups such as the Cathars.[80]

In the Western Church, the approaches that differed from the Christian–Neoplatonic consensus view developed into organized patterns and eventually even a Nominalist school, which challenged the prevailing Realist (i.e., idealist) view.[81] Furthermore, this concept, along with Buddhist concepts of proper breathing and seeing the divine light, no doubt also had an impact on the elaboration of Hesychasm.

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80 See Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Satan: The Early Christian Tradition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981).
81 On the Nominalists, see, inter alia, Etienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (New York: Random House, 1955), 499–520.

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WHY WAS THERE AN ABELARD?

The question "Where was the Russian Abelard?" is not such a simple one to answer. It could very well be rephrased, "Why was there an Abelard at all?" For an answer to this last question, we should look at Abelard's own writings and the influences on him. In that way, we may get some clues as to why Abelard appears where he does and when he does.

In Paris, Peter Abelard attended the lectures on logic and rhetoric of William of Champeaux, with whom he came into conflict,[1] and the lectures on theology of Anselm of Laon, who expelled Abelard from his school in 1113.[2] Abelard presents his own view of universals within the context of his *Glosses on Porphyry*, a commentary on Boethius's translation of and commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge*. In each of his four major works on logic, parts of which have been lost, Abelard discusses Porphyry's work. Porphyry was a pagan Neoplatonist and had written an *Introduction to the Categories of Aristotle* (called by medieval writers the *Isagoge*), which became a standard manual on logic in medieval Western Europe. The Canadian translator Edward W. Warren stated that the influence of the *Isagoge* is attributable: "(1) to its opening page where Porphyry lists a few deeper issues concerning the kind of existence enjoyed by generic and specific terms, (2) to its translation by Marius Victorinus and by Boethius, and (3) to its publication as the initial treatise in subsequent Latin editions of Aristotelian logical works. The *Isagoge* became a standard preface to work in Aristotle's logic."[3] John of Salisbury (ca. 1115–1180), in

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1 Yukio Iwakuma, "Pierre Abélard et Guillaume de Champeaux dans les premières années du XIIe: Une étude préliminaire," in *Langage, sciences, philosophie au XIIe siècle: actes de la table ronde internationale organisée les 25 et 26 mars 1998 par le Centre d'histoire des sciences et des philosophies arabes et médiévales (UPRESA 7062, CNRS/Paris VII/EPHE) et le Programme international de coopération scientifique (France–Japon) "Transmission des sciences et des techniques dans une perspective interculturelle"*, ed. Joël Biard (Paris: J. Vrin, 1999), 93–123.
2 Peter Abelard, *Historia Calamitatum/The Story of My Misfortunes: The Autobiography of Peter Abelard*, trans. Henry Adams Bellows (Glencoe: Free Press, 1922), chap. 4.
3 Edward W. Warren, "Introduction," in *Porphyry the Phoenician, Isagoge*, trans. Edward W. Warren (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1975), 12.

his *Metalogicon*, describes how Porphyry was used in the twelfth century: "One who withdraws what he never deposited, and harvests what he never sowed, is far too severe and harsh a master, as also is one who forces (poor) Porphyry to cough up the opinions of all philosophers, and will not rest content until the latter's short treatise teaches everything that has ever been written."[4] The hyperbole notwithstanding, it is well documented that the *Isagoge* was a work that heavily influenced Western European thought as the result of its being the equivalent of an introductory text-book to Aristotle's logic.[5] Concerning the "deeper issues" that Porphyry raises at the beginning of his work, it is ironic that he raises them only to say what he will not discuss:

> I shall avoid the deeper issues and in a few words try to explain the simpler notions. For example, I shall put aside the investigation of certain profound questions concerning genera and species, since such an undertaking requires more detailed examination: (1) whether genera or species exist on their own or reside merely in thought; (2) whether, if they exist, they are corporeal or incorporeal; and (3) whether they exist separate from sense objects or only in dependence on them.[6]

Yet, by articulating in such a way what he was not going to discuss, Porphyry at least raised the possibility that Aristotelian categories of genera and species are the same as Platonic transcendent forms.[7] According to Artz, not only does this passage focus on the crux of the differences between Platonism and Aristotelianism, but also on the crux of the differences between medieval Realism and Nominalism. Furthermore, Artz asserted that "[t]hese lines of Porphyry play, from Erigena on, as important a role in the history of thought as any passage of equal length in all literature outside the Bible."[8] Even if one does not fully agree with Artz's characterization of the importance of this passage for Western European intellectual history, one nonetheless must agree that it did play a prominent role in the thinking of Abelard. As the Canadian historian Brian Stock (1939–) has pointed out, Abelard's answer was an ambivalent one, or rather he came down decisively on both sides of the issue: "He [Abelard] attempted to answer three questions from Porphyry's

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4 *The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury: A Twelfth-Century Defense of the Verbal and Logical Arts of the Trivium*, trans. David D. McGarry (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1971), 148 (bk. 3, chap. 1).
5 *Metalogicon of John of Salisbury*, 110–11 (bk. 2, chap. 16). See also I. M. Bocheński, *A History of Formal Logic*, trans. and ed. Ivo Thomas (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961), 134; William Kneale and Martha Kneale, *The Development of Logic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), 198; A. C. Lloyd, "The Later Neoplatonists," in *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, ed. A. Hilary Armstrong (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 281; Walzer, "Porphyry and the Arabic Tradition," 278.
6 *Porphyry the Phoenician, Isagoge*, trans. Warren, 27–28.
7 Knowles, *Evolution of Medieval Thought*, 110.
8 Artz, *The Mind of the Middle Ages*, 255. Cook and Herzman make a similar claim for Anselm's passage that contains the ontological proof of the existence of God. William R. Cook and Ronald B. Herzman, *The Medieval World View: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 266–67: "The text of Anselm's argument has been commented upon more than any

Isagoge: Do universals exist? Are they corporeal or incorporeal? And are they part of the sensible world or not? His answer in each case was both yes and no."[9] Such an answer bears resemblance to John Italos's cosmological views on the status of the world: "Thus, the universe is out of nothingness and also has being; thus, it both exists and does not exist, it is and will not be, and is not and will be."[10] This splitting into two parts, this making of distinctions, is the core of dialectical thinking. We have no information about John Italos's education before his coming to Constantinople. Speculation about his name has led some scholars to suggest that he was born and raised in Sicily. If so, he may have come in contact there with the trivium as taught in the Western Church and, in particular, with Porphyry's *Isagoge*, which had been composed in Sicily some 800 years earlier.

In the Western Church, the tentative solution to Porphyry's questions was a "two-tiered," dialectical one. The imperfect world belongs to Aristotle; the perfect world to Plato. The compromise reconciliation by Thomas Aquinas merely provided a formal theological articulation of this tentative solution.[11] The two-tiered solution developed out of the Neoplatonic schools in Athens and Alexandria, where the study of the natural world belonged to Aristotle while theological study belonged to Plato.[12] Those who studied the natural world were allowed to use dialectic, while those who studied theology were to subsume its use to a higher epistemological authority—that is, revelation. The irony here is that Plato placed dialectic as the capstone of education, the means by which we are "able to question and answer most knowledgeably."[13] Another irony is the identification of Plato's views with rhetoric. Plato, a consummate rhetorician himself, declared rhetoric to be one of the "forms of flattery," which he opposed as a "counterpart" (ἀντίστροφος) to the "true arts"—legislation, justice, gymnastics, and medicine.[14] Plato opposed the rhetoricians, that is, those who believed only in rhetoric, namely the Sophists, and tried to defend Socrates from the charge of Sophistry.

Rhetoric grounded in Patristic literature has been the main instrument in the Eastern Church to defend its synthesis of Neoplatonism with Christianity. A combination of rhetoric and dialectic was being used in the Western Church to defend its synthesis even before the introduction of Aristotelianism. The difference in "weapons" of defence may have resulted from the stronger influence of Porphyry's

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other philosophical text of comparable size from the Middle Ages." Admittedly, Anselm's proof is longer than Porphyry's passage.

9 Brian Stock, "Science, Technology, and Economic Progress in the Early Middle Ages," in *Science in the Middle Ages*, ed. David C. Lindberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 46.

10 John Italos, *Quaestiones quodlibetales: Apopiai kai lyseis*, ed. Perikles-Ierre Joannou, *Studia patristica et byzantina*, 4 (Ettal: Buch-Kunstverlag, 1956), 123.

11 Friedrich Heer's phrase is "two-tiered theological structure" in his *The Medieval World: Europe 1100 to 1350*, trans. Janet Sondheimer (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962), 222.

12 On this point, see Warren, "Introduction," 10.

13 Plato, *The Republic*, 533c–534e. Cf. Robert Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values* (New York: Bantam, 1974), 330.

14 Plato, *Gorgias*, 464–68.

unanswered questions on the Western Church. Thus, while the mystical conception of the One was primary in Plotinos's cosmology, Porphyry and his commentators left the door open for the use of analytical reasoning, and, in doing so, provided an opening for Abelard's questioning of, and later for those who have been called Nominalists to attack, the prevailing Neoplatonic mysticism of the Realists. In other words, the ground was already well prepared for the Western Church's acceptance of Aristotle in the thirteenth century. Nonetheless, this acceptance was conditional, for it depended upon the stipulation that Aristotelian thought not be applied to theological matters, or as Warren described it: "The notion that Plato and Aristotle were in harmony was partially purchased at this time by assigning to each different spheres of interest."[15] This notion emerged, however, only after the Council of Sens in 1210 attempted to ban Aristotle's scientific (i.e., natural philosophy) writings.[16] In 1215, Robert, a papal legate, in describing the Rules of the University of Paris, prohibited lecturing "on the books of Aristotle on metaphysics and natural philosophy or on the summaries of them." Yet, significantly, he allowed lecturing "on the books of Aristotle on dialectic old and new … in the ordinary but not in the cursory (*ad cursum*) manner," that is, by full professors only.[17] In 1231, however, Pope Gregory IX (r. 1227–1241) decreed that expurgated versions of Aristotle's works on metaphysics and natural philosophy could be used in the schools.[18] Thus, the very works of Aristotle that the Western Church found so threatening (those on metaphysics and natural philosophy) were a normal part of Byzantine education, while the works of Aristotle on dialectic, which were a normal part of the curriculum in the Western Church, were considered threatening within Byzantine education.

On the upper tier were Neoplatonic doctrines and dogmas of the Church (for example, the doctrine of the Trinity). Matters on this level were fundamentally mystical and mysterious, beyond argument or disputation, unable to be comprehended by the human mind (διάνοια), but only by the intellect (νοῦς). In 1228, Gregory IX reasserted the hegemony of the upper tier when he told the Faculty of Theology in Paris that "theology, dominant over all the other disciplines, exercises its authority over them as the spirit exercises it over the flesh."[19] On the lower tier were the perceptions and conceptions of this world (for example, the question of motion, which was Aristotelian). Questions on this level were fit subjects for argument and comprehension by the human mind. Problems with

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15 Warren, "Introduction," 10.

16 *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, no. 11, vol. 1, p. 70.

17 *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, no. 20, vol. 1, pp. 78–79. On the distinction between ordinary and extraordinary or cursory lectures, see Lynn Thorndike's comment in *University Records and Life in the Middle Ages*, ed. Lynn Thorndike (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), 28n1.

18 *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, no. 79, vol. 1, pp. 136–39 (April 13, 1231) and no. 87, vol. 1, pp. 143–44 (April 23, 1231).

19 Quoted in Etienne Gilson, *La philosophie au moyen age des origines patristiques à la fin du XIVe siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris: Payot, 1952), 2:395–96.

this bifurcation of roles resulted when attempts were made by those who wanted to apply Aristotelian logic to Neoplatonic doctrines. Eriugena challenged the mystery of the upper tier with his belief that reason could figure it out, but his work was condemned. Eriugena's magnum opus, *De divisione naturae* (*On the Division of Nature*), did not attract much attention until Amalric of Bène (d. ca. 1204–1207) appealed to it for support when he was being accused of pantheism. Pope Honorius III (r. 1216–1227) then in 1225 declared the work heretical. It is likely that, had Eriugena's work remained unrecognized for a few more years, it would never have received papal approbation. On the other hand, the papacy may have viewed Eriugena as representative of the rival Celtic–Irish tradition within Western Christianity anyway.

In the early eleventh century, Berengar (ca. 1000–1088), French theologian and head of the Cathedral School at Tours, applied dialectic to theology and, as a result, denied transubstantiation and, in a reply to Lanfranc of Bec, rejected authority. The then-prevailing view of transubstantiation derived from the idea of Paschasius Radbertus, abbot of Corbie in the ninth century, that after consecration in the Mass the bread became the real body and the wine became the real blood of Christ. Berengar, in his *De corpore et sanguine Domini* (*On the Body and Blood of the Lord*), favoured the view, espoused by Ratramnus, a monk at Corbie, that the bread and wine became the body and blood of Christ only symbolically.[20] In doing so, Berengar claimed that it was the attribute of reason that meant humans were created in God's image. Therefore, since dialectic is reason, one should have "recourse to dialectic in all things."[21] A series of Church councils from 1049 to 1079 condemned Berengar's views on the Eucharist and compelled him to recant.

Towards the end of the eleventh century, Anselm of Canterbury suggested that Roscellinus of Compiègne (ca. 1045 or 1050–1120) was, in effect, challenging the very Neoplatonic basis of the upper tier by denying universals altogether, that they are "no more than verbal expressions (*flatum vocis*)."[22] It is difficult to know exactly what Roscellinus's views were, since the only work we have that is generally attributed to him is a letter to Abelard on the Trinity.[23] But it seems unlikely Roscellinus denied universals as such. The Council of Soissons in 1092 only questioned his views but did not condemn them. If he had been denying the existence of universals, then that would certainly have ensured his condemnation. Instead, Roscellinus may have been merely raising an epistemological question of

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20 Jean de Montclos, *Lanfranc et Bérenger. La controverse Eucharistique du XIe siècle* (Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1971), 49–50.

21 Quoted in Haskins, *Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*, 27. Cf. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages*, 198–200; Gordon Leff, *Medieval Thought: St. Augustine to Ockham* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1958), 95.

22 Anselm, *De fide Trinitatis et de incarnatione verbi*, chap. 2, in *PL*, 158: col. 265. See also John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, 112. Although pointing out that Anselm cites no work of Roscellinus where he expressed such a view, Gilson accepted Anselm's characterization of Roscellinus' views as "probable." Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy*, 625n89.

23 Roscellinus, *Quae est Roscelini ad P. Abaelardum*, in *PL*, 178: cols. 357–72.

how we know what we call universals are really universals and not merely verbal expressions.[24]

Some scholars have proposed that Abelard, rather than Roscellinus, be considered the founder of Nominalism.[25] Other scholars have suggested that Abelard attempted to find a middle way (sometimes called Conceptualist) between the prevailing Neoplatonic consensus views of the Realists and the challenge to them of the Nominalists. Yet, Nominalism as a school of thought was formed only after the time of Abelard, so it is unlikely he was trying to find a way to reconcile Realism with that which had not even been founded. Instead, the concern of the Realists was most likely that Abelard and Roscellinus were articulating ideas that undermined their (the Realists') position. The Nominalists later did exactly what the Realists of the eleventh century were concerned that Abelard and Roscellinus were doing. While any questioning of the consensus view was not tolerated by the Realists, it makes more sense for us, in describing the position of Roscellinus and Abelard on universals, to keep their views distinct from the Nominalists.

If we think of Nominalists as those who deny the existence of universals, then neither Roscellinus nor Abelard were Nominalists. Instead, both Roscellinus (insofar as we can determine his views) and Abelard were more likely suggesting that the study of this world through dialectic might allow one to understand universals. That is, they doubted the efficacy of intuitive, inborn universal concepts in the mind. It was exactly these intuitive, inborn concepts that the prevailing Neoplatonic Realists were saying are universals, divorced from the things of this world. According to them, sense perceptions can unlock the knowledge of universals already within us. Otherwise, sense perceptions can only lead us astray. Roscellinus and Abelard did not raise the question of the existence of universals as such. They were merely questioning how one can come to know them. Abelard's answer was through using dialectic as a diagnostic tool.

Thomas Aquinas attempted to resolve the issue through compromise. He accepted that through faith we know when we have unlocked an internal understanding of universals, but that this understanding can also come through using dialectic as a diagnostic tool. Since universals are in God's mind before the particular (*universalia ante rem*), they can also exist in the human mind after the particular (*universalia post rem*). Aquinas thereby accepted both "intuition" and dialectic as

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24 Intriguingly, Hauréau attributed a text on universals to Roscellinus. Barthelemy Hauréau, *Notices et extraits de quelques manuscrits latines de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, 6 vols. (Paris: Klincksieck, 1890–1893), 5:325–33. The historian of medieval philosophy Maurice de Wulf (1867–1947) dismisses this attribution as "only a conjecture," apparently because in the work the author acknowledges that universals do exist. Maurice de Wulf, *History of Mediaeval Philosophy*, 3 vols. (New York: Dover, 1952), 1:148n6. We can, in turn, set aside de Wulf's dismissal because it seems based on acceptance of the questionable accusations of Roscellinus' opponents, Anselm and John of Salisbury, rather than on Roscellinus' own words.

25 See, e.g., Calvin G. Normore, "The Tradition of Mediaeval Nominalism," in *Studies in Medieval Philosophy*, ed. John F. Wippel (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1987) (= *Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, vol. 17), 203–5.

ways to the truth, provided dialectic did not contradict faith. If dialectic did contradict faith, then for Aquinas it was being used incorrectly. To some of us on this side of the Scientific Revolution it looks suspiciously as though Aquinas was trying to use dialectic to reach preconceived notions. Yet, the wider diagnostic area that Aquinas allowed for dialectic opened the door for the true Nominalists and other practitioners of the "modern way" to challenge that attempted resolution of the issue by questioning the very existence of universals themselves.[26]

It may have been from Roscellinus directly, or through William of Champeaux, that the significance of Porphyry's questions was first brought to the attention of Abelard. Thus, through Porphyry's articulation of the fundamental problem of trying to resolve Plato with Aristotle, and through the widespread distribution of his *Isagoge* in which this formulation appears, as well as through Boethius's commentaries, Porphyry's questions remained not only unresolved but became a focus of dispute within the Western Church.

In the Eastern Church, no organized view opposed to the Christian–Neoplatonic consensus was allowed to develop. In this sense, there was no need for anyone to attempt to adjudicate the differences. The questions of Porphyry played no significant role in the Eastern Church. His writings had aroused the ire of Constantine I (r. 306–337), and Theodosius II (r. 402–450) ordered all copies of his *Kata Christianōn* (*Against the Christians*) (ca. 270) to be burned in 448.[27] Pagan Neoplatonic philosophers and teachers were not tolerated in fifth-century Byzantium. Under the Emperor Zeno (r. 474–475, 476–491), pagan professors accused of propagating Neoplatonic doctrines had either to convert to Christianity or resign their positions. As early as 415, in Alexandria, the Neoplatonist philosopher Hypatia (ca. 350/70–415) was kidnapped and carried off to a church where she was stripped, then beaten to death by Christian fanatics.[28] The Muslims took over the Neoplatonic Academy in Alexandria in the mid-seventh century. And the Neoplatonic Academy in Athens, which presumably could have continued the two-tiered structure in the Eastern Church (and thereby continue to raise Porphyry's questions), was closed by Justinian in 529. The continued existence of the Eastern Imperial apparatus meant that it was difficult for officially proscribed writings to survive undetected. After the disintegration of the Western Roman Empire, the absence of such a centralized political authority allowed writings and ideas perceived as dissident not only to survive but to flourish. And even when a comparable secular authority reconstituted itself in Europe, that is the Carolingian Empire, we find the trivium propagated through Charlemagne's own "minister of education," Alcuin of York.

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26 For a fuller discussion, see Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy*, 489–520.

27 Psellos refers to an order requiring all of Porphyry's works to be burned. See Edward Kurtz and Francis Drexl, *Michaelis Pselli. Scripta minora*, 2 vols. (Milan: Società editrice "Vite e pensiero," 1936–1941) 1: *Orationes et dissertationes*, 267.

28 Damaskios, *Damascii Vitae Isidori reliquiae*, ed. Clemens Zintzen (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1967), 104; Socrates Scholasticus, *Ecclesiastical History* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1874), 348–49; John, Bishop of Nikiu, *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu: Translated from Zotenberg's Ethiopic Text*, trans. R. H. Charles (Merchantville: Evolution Publishing, 2007), 100–1.

It would be incorrect, however, to think that the Eastern Church did not tolerate the writings of Porphyry, and that manuscript copies of his *Isagoge* survived only in Western Europe,[29] or that Abelard arose to try to answer those questions in the Western Church while no one even knew of the questions in the Eastern Church. They knew of Porphyry's questions in areas served by the Eastern Church. Jerome (ca. 347–420) reports that he was taught logic from the *Isagoge* at Antioch already in the 370s.[30] In his fourth-century *Life of Antony*, Athanasius (ca. 296/98–373) has Antony (Anthony) pitying certain Greeks who visited him and "attempted to construct syllogisms." Antony told them that "demonstration through arguments is unnecessary, or perhaps even useless."[31] But these issues were resolved in a one-tiered hierarchical schema of apophatic theology based on negation.[32] That is, the only way to speak of God, as the pagan Neoplatonists spoke of the One, was in negatives. Maximos the Confessor (580–662) wrote that "negative statements about divine matters are the only true ones."[33] An individual can, therefore, communicate with God only through silence and through "knowing ignorance." Both Gregory of Nazianzos (ca. 329–390) and Pseudo-Dionysios had stated that "the very fact of knowing nothing is knowledge surpassing the mind."[34] Furthermore, Maximos the Confessor wrote: "God becomes knowable by means of ignorance."[35] Therefore, as he stated elsewhere: "a perfect mind is one that, by true faith, in supreme ignorance knows the supremely unknowable one."[36]

The early theologians of the Eastern Church were well grounded in Aristotelian logic, in dialectic, and even in Porphyry's *Isagoge*. Leontios the Hermit (475–543/4), who has been called the founder of Byzantine Aristotelianism,[37] argued that applying

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29 Richard Walzer, "Furfūriyūs," *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 13 vols., ed. H. A. R. Gibb and P. J. Bearman (Leiden: Brill, 1960–2006), 2:948. The *Isagoge* is the only work of Porphyry's to survive both in Greek and in Arabic. Walzer, "Porphyry and the Arabic Tradition," 278.

30 Jerome, "To Domnio," in *Select Works and Letters*, vol. 6 of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, 2nd ser., ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eeerdmans, 1900), no. 50.1. www.tertullian.org/fathers2/NPNF2-06/Npnf2-06-03.htm#P1739_412778.

31 Athanasius, *The Life of Antony and the Letter to Marcellinus*, trans. Robert C. Gregg (New York: Paulist Press, 1991), 84, 87.

32 Emile Bréhier, in his study of medieval philosophy, pointed out, perhaps with a sense of regret, that "in the Eastern countries ... any intellectual activity seems to have been absorbed by the sciences of divinity." Emile Bréhier, *Philosophie du Moyen Age* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1937), 3.

33 Maximos, *Ambiguorum liber*, in *PG*, 91: col. 1241. See also Lars Thunberg, *Microcosm and Mediator: The Theological Anthropology of Maximus the Confessor* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1965), 436–42.

34 See also Dionysios the Areopagite, *Epistle I*, in *PG*, 3: col. 1065 where Dionysios talks about how it is only through "unknowing" (αγνώ σια) that we may know God. Cf. Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (London: James Clark, 1957), 25: "Proceeding by negations one ascends from the inferior degrees of being to the highest, by progressively setting aside all that can be known, in order to draw near to the Unknown in the darkness of absolute ignorance."

35 Maximos, *De Divinis nominibus. Scholia*, in *PG*, 4: col. 216.

36 Maximos, *De Charitate*, in *PG*, 90: col. 1048.

37 Wilhelm Rugamer, *Leontius Von Byzanz. Ein Polemiker aus dem zeitalter Justinians* (Wurzburg: Andreas Gobel's Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1894), 72; David Beecher Evans, *Leontius*

Aristotelian categories of genera and species to the world does not lead to truth but to an infinite regress from the truth.[38] In other words, we become clearer and clearer about less and less. John of Damascus was also well aware of dialectic. The first section of his *Pege gnoseos* (*Font of Knowledge*) deals in general with dialectic, which he subsumed as "a servant of theology," and specifically with Porphyry's *Isagoge*. Like Leontios, John claimed no originality: "I shall say nothing of my own,"[39] which indicates his acceptance of the conception that all of truth has already been revealed. This was a standard topos that Gregory of Nazianzos and Pseudo-Dionysios, among others further east, had also adopted.[40] Since John of Damascus says a lot that is his own, what he means is that what he is saying coincides with previously known truth. For John of Damascus, as for subsequent Eastern Christian writers, dialectic is not to be carried any further than is necessary for supporting faith, that is through the truth that has already been revealed, but not to be used for determining new, previously unknown, truth because such "truth" cannot, by definition, exist. In other words, dialectic was merely a descriptive, not a diagnostic, tool. This was also the dominant view in the Western Church at the time of Abelard.[41]

According to his critics, Abelard was using dialectic not only to describe the received truth but also to diagnose new truths in the theological realm. Bernard of Clairvaux and those who held the prevailing consensus view perceived such activity as threatening the good and the beautiful. In a letter to Pope Innocent II (r. 1130–1143), Bernard characterized Abelard as "an old teacher turned into a new theologian, who in his youth amused himself with the art of dialectic and now rages against the Holy Scriptures."[42] By characterizing him this way, Bernard clearly indicated that he saw the threat to old, superior theology from dialectic, which the

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of Byzantium: An Origenist Christology* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, Center for Byzantine Studies, 1970). See also Friedrich Loofs, *Leontius von Byzanz und die gleichnamigen Schriftsteller der griechischen Kirche* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1887), 297–303; Adolf von Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, 3 vols. in 2 (Freiburg i. B.: Akademische Verlagsbuchhandlung von J. C. B. Mohr, 1886–1890).

38 Leontios, *Libri tres contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos*, in *PG*, 86, pt. 1: col. 1296.

39 John of Damascus, *The Fount of Knowledge*, trans. Frederic H. Chase, Jr. (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1981), 4.

40 For example, Confucius: "I have transmitted what was taught to me without making up anything of my own." *The Analects of Confucius*, 7:1–3, trans. Arthur Waley (New York: Vintage, 1989), 123.

41 Umberto Eco places in the mouth of his character Jorge de Borges words that represent this prevailing view of the Western Church: "the work of our order and in particular the work of this monastery, a part—indeed, the substance—is study, and the preservation of knowledge. Preservation of, I say, not search for, because the property of knowledge, as a divine thing, is that it is complete and has been defined since the beginning, in the perfection of the World which expresses itself to itself. Preservation, I say, and not search, because it is a property of knowledge, as a human thing, that it has been defined and completed over the course of the centuries, from the preaching of the prophets to the interpretation of the fathers of the church. There is no progress, no revolution of ages, in the history of knowledge, but at most a continuous and sublime recapitulation." Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*, trans. William Weaver (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983), 399.

42 Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sancti Bernardi abbatis Clarae-Vallensis Opera Omnia*, ed. John Mabillon, 6 vols., 4th ed. (Paris: Gaume Fratres, 1839), vol. 1, pt. 1, cols. 1441–42.

new (read: inferior) theologian had dabbled in. Furthermore, Bernard criticized Abelard's arrogance in thinking that through dialectic he could understand the mysteries of the faith:

> Of everything that is in heaven above and in the earth below there is nothing that he pretends not to know. He raises his eyes to Heaven, and investigates the greatness of God. Then returning to us, he brings back unspeakable words that it is not allowed for a man to say, while he is prepared to give back a reason for everything, even of those things that are above reason. He presumes against reason and against faith. For what is more against reason than by reason to endeavor to transcend reason?[43]

Bernard complained that

> Abelard is trying to destroy the virtue of the Christian faith, when he thinks himself able by unaided human reason to comprehend the whole that God is … He is a man great in his own eyes [alone], a disputer of the faith, a man who busies himself about great and wonderful matters that are out of his reach, a prier into the Majesty of God.[44]

Such a criticism is similar to one of the complaints that Archbishop of Canterbury Lanfranc had against Berengar—that he attempts to understand "those things that cannot be understood."[45] For Bernard, "The faith of the righteous believes; it does not dispute." And what Bernard believed was that one attained mystical union with God through "vigilance and prayers and much effort and showers of tears," not through dialectic.[46] Abelard, on the other side, not only defends the use of dialectic but, in his commentary on the *Posterior Analytics*, exalts its position as discerner of truth:

> especially one must insist upon the study of that doctrine by which the greater truth is known. This is dialectic, whose function is to distinguish between every truth and falsity: as leader in all knowledge, it holds the primary and rule of all philosophy. The same also is shown to be needful to the Catholic Faith, which cannot without its aid resist the sophistries of schismatics.[47]

Matthew Paris (ca. 1200–1259) took the same position when he referred to "the rules of logic, which is the infallible guide to truth."[48]

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43 Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sancti Bernardi Opera Omnia*, vol. 1, pt. 1, col. 1442.

44 Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sancti Bernardi Opera Omnia*, vol. 1, pt. 1, col. 1465.

45 Lanfranc, *De corpore et sanguine Domini: Adversus Berengarium Turonensem*, in *PL*, 150: col. 427.

46 Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sancti Bernardi Opera Omnia*, vol. 1, pt. 2, col. 2870.

47 Peter Abelard, *Ouvrages inédits d'Abélard*, ed. Victor Cousin (Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1836), 435.

48 Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ed. Henry Richards Luard, vol. 5: *A.D. 1248 to A.D. 1259* (London: Longman, 1880), 211.

Western churchmen, like Anselm of Canterbury and Bernard of Clairvaux, realized that dialectic could be used to reach conclusions that were destructive, and they wanted to prevent that. While we in the twenty-first century may think of Abelard as a constructive and progressive thinker, we should remember that he was perceived as obnoxious and dangerous by the authorities of his time. The American historian Henry Osborn Taylor (1856–1941) declared that Abelard was imbued with a "fatal impulse to annoy" and "was certainly possessed with an inordinate impulsion to undo his rivals." Thus, he "would have led others and himself a life of thorns" even in later centuries "when some of his methods and opinions had become accepted commonplace."[49] While Abelard's personality was certainly contributory to his success among his students, such cannot be considered significant for explaining why analytical thinking triumphed in the Western Church. No doubt there were arrogant personality types with a propensity for annoyance in the Eastern Church as well, John Italos being one of them. Italos's attempt to apply dialectic to theological matters, though, occurred after he had reached the top of his profession and when he was already advanced in years.

For those authorities who were being annoyed by Abelard, the three attributes of the One—Truth, Goodness, and Beauty—could not be in opposition. Therefore, whatever "truths" Abelard and dialectic apprehended that were antithetical to Goodness and Beauty, as they understood them, had to be wrong and, therefore, not Truth. In the Eastern Church, John of Damascus, several centuries earlier, had realized this problem and had clearly formulated this very position denying the diagnostic value of dialectic in theological matters. Since there was not a strong subcurrent of dialectic in the Eastern Church, no one, until John Italos, seriously challenged that view. John of Damascus may merely have dealt the deathblow to a concept that had exhibited no vitality of its own in Eastern Church thought. The late ninth-century anonymous author of the *Life* of John Psichaïtes assures us that his subject had no use for dialectic, "premises and syllogisms and logical arguments being like spiders' webs, he assigned to the dung-heap."[50] In the fourteenth century, Demetrios Kydones expressed surprise that the Western Church theologians "show great thirst for walking in those labyrinths of Aristotle and Plato, for which our people never showed interest."[51] And those who had shown an interest, such as John Italos and his pupils, were successfully suppressed.

I have argued that the difference in *mentalité* between the Eastern and Western Churches can be attributed to a difference in interpretation of Neoplatonism. Here I will be as clear as I can about the way I see the different *mentalités*. The three

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49 Henry Osborn Taylor, *Medieval Mind: A History of the Development of Thought and Emotion in the Middle Ages*, 4th ed. (London: Macmillan, 1927), 2:372–73.

50 Paul Van den Van, ed., "La vie grecque de S. Jean le Psichaïte, confesseur sous le règne de Léon l'Arméniem (813–820)," *Le Muséon* NS, 3 (1902): 109.

51 Demetrios Kydones, "Apologie della propria fede," in *Notizie di Procoro e Demetrio Cidone*, ed. Giovanni Mercati, Studi e Testi 56 (Vatican: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1931), 366. For a general study of the "Apology," see Frances Kianka, "The Apology of Demetrius Cydones: A Fourteenth-Century Autobiographical Source," *Byzantine Studies* 7 (1980): 57–71.

aspects of Neoplatonism that seem to have had the most impact on Christianity were hypostases, hierarchy, and emanation. The theologians of the Eastern and Western Churches applied the concept of hypostases differently to the mystery of the Trinity, which contributed to the ultimate split between them. And the Western Church's concept of purgatory clearly violated the Eastern Church's concept of a single hierarchical continuum, as first formulated by Pseudo-Dionysios[52] and crystallized by John Climacus (ca. 579–649).[53] But it was the concept of emanation that was most significant for the differing intellectual interpretations. For the dialectical tradition of the Western Church, the interpretation goes this way: if this world is an emanation from God, then this world provides clues to the nature of God. These clues stimulate the motivation for further study of the material world in order to understand the Divine Intellect. These clues, however, have to be analyzed in the light of dialectic, that is, the analytical approach that has become so closely associated with Western cultural values, both religious and secular.

We see the culmination of this line of development in the historical philosophy of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), who argued that history is the unfolding of the Absolute, and that if we understand history we understand the Absolute and become quasi-divine ourselves.[54] Hegel testifies that the Neoplatonist Proclos was an influence on his thinking.[55] During the seventeenth century, the German mathematician Johannes Kepler (1571–1630) believed that mathematical reasoning provided the means for understanding God and came to believe that "Geometry, coeternal with God and shining in the divine Mind, gave God the pattern … by which He laid out the World so that it might be Best and Most Beautiful, and finally most like the Creator."[56] Elsewhere, Kepler claims that "Geometry is one and eternal shining in the Mind of God. That share in it accorded to men is one of the reasons (*causae*) that Man is the image of God."[57] A parallel to this concept is the claim of the physicist Stephen Hawking (1942–2018) that if we discover a complete theory of the universe, then we may be able to answer the question of why the universe exists, which "would be the ultimate triumph of human reason—for then we would know the mind of God."[58] It could be argued that the concept of a Big Bang, before which the laws of physics as we know them did not exist, is itself

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52 Paul Tillich asserted that Dionysios may have coined the word "hierarchy." Paul Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought: From Its Judaic and Hellenistic Origins to Existentialism*, ed. Carl E. Braaten (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), 91. Le Goff did not discuss this issue in his otherwise comprehensive study of purgatory. Jacques Le Goff, *La naissance du Purgatoire* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1981).

53 John Climachus, *St. John Climacus: The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, trans. Archimandrite Lazarus Moore (London: Faber & Faber, 1959).

54 See Martin Malia's discussion of these aspects of Hegel's philosophy in his *Alexander Herzen and the Birth of Russian Socialism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), 228–33.

55 Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 130.

56 *Johannes Kepler Gesammelte Werke* (*KGW*), eds. Walther von Dyck et al., 20 vols. (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1937–), 6:104–5 (from *Harmones Mundi*, chap. 1).

57 *KGW*, vol. 4, p. 308, ll. 9–10.

58 Stephen Hawking, *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes* (Toronto: Bantam, 1988), 175.

a Neoplatonic construct. Subsequently, Chet Raymo (1936–), an educator and naturalist, gave further expression to this formulation: "that is where I would start constructing a concept of God that is relevant to our time—with mathematics. ... If we are mathematical creatures, it is because the world is in some deeply mysterious sense mathematical. Call it, if you will, the mind of God."[59]

The underlying assumption of these attempts to understand the Mind of God is theophany, that is, that this world is the unfolding of the ideal and eternal forms of the Divine Intellect. Indeed, the trivium and quadrivium provide the basis for the two distinguishing principles of Western intellectual achievement: the art of reasoning and the science of numbers. The subjects of the trivium—grammar, rhetoric, dialectic—serve to articulate one's argument in a convincing manner, while the subjects of the quadrivium involve numbers in different ways: numbers in themselves (arithmetic); numbers taking form but immovable (geometry); numbers taking form but in motion (astronomy); and the relationship of numbers to each other (music).[60] When Boethius in the early sixth century wrote about the study of numbers in themselves (arithmetic), he was one of the first to provide the argument that Kepler and Hawking are merely modern practitioners of, that is: "everything that is formed from natural origins seems to be formed on a numerical basis. For this was the design foremost in the mind of the creator."[61] While Kepler saw his cosmographical views as deriving from Plato and Proclos, his use of quantifiable units rather than abstractions to describe the Mind of God would seem to owe more to Euclid and Boethius.[62]

Attempts to figure out the Mind of God, in the Eastern Church view, are hopeless and bound to fail. For theologians of the Eastern Church, the interpretation of their Neoplatonic heritage goes this way: if God is a mystery, and this world is an emanation from God, then this world is a mystery too. In the Eastern Church, they did not ask "Why," probably because, for them, any answer, any explanation, was merely a begging of the question. Why divide into categories what is whole and seamless? Why try to articulate what is ineffable? The mystery of it all is what is beautiful and good and true. That is what is "brute fact." That is just the way it is. Even the question

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59 Chet Raymo, "True Nature of Math Remains, in Sum, a Mystery," *Boston Globe*, December 28, 1992, p. 26. See also Steven Weinberg, *Dreams of a Final Theory: The Search for the Fundamental Laws of Nature* (New York: Pantheon, 1992), 242. Recent books that invoke this concept include: James Trefil, *Reading the Mind of God: In Search of the Principle of Universality* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1989); Edward Craig, *The Mind of God and the Works of Man* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); Paul Davis, *The Mind of God: The Scientific Basis for a Rational World* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991); and Robert Matthews, *Unravelling the Mind of God: Mysteries at the Frontiers of Science* (London: Virgin, 1992).

60 Hans Martin Klinkenberg, "Der Verfall des Quadriviums im frühen Mittelalter," in *Artes liberales von der antiken Bildung zur Wissenschaft des Mittelalters*, ed. Josef Koch, vol. 5 of "Studien und Texte zur Geistesgeschichte des Mittelalters" (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 2.

61 Boethius, *De Arithmetica*, in *PL*, 63: col. 1083.

62 For a discussion of Kepler's relationship to Plato, Euclid, and Proclos, see J. V. Field, *Kepler's Geometrical Cosmology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

"Where was the Russian Abelard?" is alien to that way of thinking. There just wasn't one and that's all there is to it.

Although apophatic theology was also dominant in the Western Church before the thirteenth century, there was another tradition, a kataphatic one, which asserted that this world and some parts of the Divine Soul and the Mind of God were knowable through our minds, through rational argument, and through disputation. Thus, Thomas Aquinas's reconciliation of apophatic and kataphatic theologies was this: faith and reason (when properly applied) could never be truly in opposition. For the Eastern Church, faith was always superior to reason. Eastern Church thinkers did not see any worth in disputation, since God could not be known through rational argument, only through the intuitional communion of our souls with the Divine Soul, and then only in a negational sense—what God was not.

The American philosopher Robert Pirsig (1928–2017), in his analysis of the relationship of Plato's dialectic to Sophist rhetoric, draws a distinction between the truth (the dialectic) and the good (rhetoric). While the tendency is to associate dialectic with what is logical and reasonable, and rhetoric with what is false, artificial, and showy, Pirsig perceived their value in reverse. Here is how he described the working of the mind of his character Phaedrus when asked a question by a philosophy professor:

> His mind races on and on, through the permutations of the dialectic, on and on, hitting things, finding new branches and sub-branches, exploding with anger at each new discovery of the viciousness and meanness and lowness of this "art" called dialectic ... Phaedrus' mind races on and on and then on further, seeing now at last a kind of evil thing, an evil deeply entrenched in himself, which *pretends* to try to understand love and beauty and truth and wisdom but whose real purpose is never to understand them, whose real purpose is always to usurp them and enthrone itself. Dialectic—the usurper. That is what he sees. The parvenu, muscling in on all that is Good and seeking to contain and control it. Evil.[63]

I can see Bernard of Clairvaux and Eastern Church theologians readily agreeing with Pirsig's characterization of dialectic.

We can apply this distinction between dialectic and rhetoric, with appropriate reservations, to the differences according to which Neoplatonic Christianity developed in the Western and Eastern Churches. In Western Christendom, after the thirteenth century, the search of greater, previously unknown truths (through dialectic) of this world was seen as good and won out over lesser, known truths, which were only there to be preserved. In Eastern Christendom, the preservation of the old (and only) truths was seen as good and won out over the search for new (and thereby false) truths. It is more exciting, however, for the young to search for the new and to be innovative than it is to have to be restricted to the old. Pedagogically, this difference resulted in a lively reawakening of learning in the Western cathedral schools and

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63 Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, 334.

universities of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. When Abelard taught, he excited hundreds of students because his approach resonated with them. He had a ready audience that had been prepped in dialectic for some time preceding. The Austrian historian Friedrich Heer (1916–1983) wrote about this audience in evocative terms:

> It was, indeed, during the twelfth century that youth made its first real appearance on the European stage, full of physical and mental curiosity, hungry to taste reality. Especially remarkable is the preponderance of youthful clerks, ready to work and learn, to explore the cosmos of mind and spirit; a *Sturm und Drang* of young men—very soon to be joined by young women—always eager to know more, to find out more, experience more, to love and even suffer more. For the first time large numbers of these 'young people' (who might be any age, 12, 17 or even 40) were aroused to the depths of their being, depths as yet unclaimed by conversion to Christianity or by folk culture.[64]

The mention of "clerks" (meaning "lay clerics") is significant. At this point in European history a secular record-keeping apparatus was beginning to develop. The idea was that there was a need for literate record-keepers in the households of kings and nobility, and secular rulers drew from the ecclesiastical record-keeping apparatuses for literate clerks.[65] The intellectual descendents of these clerks were the civil servants who, along with lawyers, made up the National Assembly, proposed the French Revolution in 1789, and enthroned Reason as the new divinity. In addition, according to the intellectual historian A. G. Lehmann (1922–2006), some twenty cardinals and fifty bishops could claim to have been students of Abelard.[66] It is estimated that, by the year 1200, there were 5,000 students in Paris alone. The Medieval Peripatetics had instigated an educational revolution by showing their students how to use the knife of dialectic to slice and dice the ideas, arguments, and even the very words of their opponents. Abelard and his co-dialecticians transformed dialectic from a subject to be studied into a method that could be applied to the study of any subject. It must have been exhilarating for these students to be given a whole new way of thinking.

Haskins raised the question "why, with the translation of Boethius in existence, the *New Logic* was neglected until the twelfth century, and why it was so suddenly revived." Haskins also in effect begged the question by suggesting as an answer that "in an age which had use for only elementary logic … the advanced treatises fell into neglect" and that with "the revival of dialectic in the twelfth century men begin to seek additions to the store of logical writings and they discover the Boethian text."[67]

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64 Heer, *The Medieval World*, 81.
65 See, e.g., John W. Baldwin, "*Studium et regnum*: The Penetration of University Personnel into French and English Administration at the Turn of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries," *Revue des études islamiques* 44 (1976): 199–215.
66 Lehmann, *The European Heritage*, 61. Lehmann pointed out that among Abelard's students were the future Pope Innocent III and Maurice de Sully, who masterminded Notre Dame Cathedral.
67 Haskins, *Mediaeval Science*, 233.

It seems to me that it is more than merely one age having use for only elementary logic while another age had use for more advanced logic. Instead, it is what one uses logic for—as an exercise of the mind or as an approach to the world. People like Berengar, Roscellinus, and Abelard probably saw dialectic as a means of rousing popular support against their opponents in the Church. The American historian Henry Adams (1838–1918) attributed Abelard's success among the young to his use of a particular type of logic, the *reductio ad absurdum*.[68] Those who resort to *reductio ad absurdum* often seem to relish doing so. In contrast, the Byzantine writer Theodore Prodromos (ca. 1100–ca. 1165 or 1170) describes in some detail the disrespect students in Byzantine schools had for learning.[69] Students need to be engaged with their subject matter. They need to interact with it. While repetition may be the mother of learning, continued repetition smothers it.

It may not be too much of a generalization to characterize Eastern Church thought as synthetic, as bringing everything together into one whole, one entirety, one eternity. This is what the French medievalist Jean Gimpel (1918–1996) was referring to when he wrote about the fact that Orthodox priests did not allow mechanical clocks to be installed in churches until the twentieth century. For the clerics of the Eastern Church a clock "would have been blasphemy; for the mathematical division of time … had no relationship with the eternity of time."[70] The political structure reflected that view—one basileus over the whole world, the kingdom of Heaven on earth.[71] This approach characterized the individual as inseparably part of the whole, and the whole encompassed all the individual parts. Western Church thought began as basically synthetic, but due to various divisions—political, religious, intellectual—an analytic trend developed. Ideas and concepts were broken down (analyzed), categorized, then re-combined in different ways. The Two Swords theory was one manifestation of a this-is-this-and-that-is-that approach. Now there are those in the West trying to recapture the synthetic wholeness of things, the beauty of it all, for example, in quantum physics in the search for the Grand Unified Theory (GUT) and in the trend towards a world government, but thus far they have too many categories, too many distinctions, too many "ugly facts" slicing and dicing their beautiful GUTs.

For Eastern Church theologians, it is senseless to argue about the mystery of things for there was nothing to argue about. When a reporter asked the musician Louis Armstrong (1901–1971) to describe what jazz is, he replied, "Man, if you gotta ask you'll never know." Orthodox Christianity is like jazz in this sense.

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68 Henry Adams, *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* (London: Constable, 1950), 288.

69 "Teodoro Prodromo," quoted in Raffaelle Cantarella, *Poeti bizantini*, 2 vols. (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 1948), 1:185–94, no. 82; cf. 2:215–25.

70 Jean Gimpel, *The Medieval Machine: The Industrial Revolution of the Middle Ages* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976), 169.

71 A. C. Lloyd raises this point of a philosophy's "mirroring of political structure" in regard to the development of Neoplatonism within the Roman Empire in the third century. Lloyd, "The Later Neoplatonists," 274.

THE EASTERN CHURCH'S PHILOSOPHICAL OUTLOOK

I will provide here only one example of the difficulty Western-trained scholars have in understanding the Eastern Church *mentalité*. The English historian Steven Runciman (1903–2000) describes the exchange of correspondence between the Lutherans and the Patriarch of Constantinople Jeremias II Tranos (r. 1572–1579, 1580–1584, 1587–1595) in the sixteenth century this way:

> in the middle of the century the Lutherans, under the philhellene Melanchton, began to make overtures to the Greek Church, as an ally against Rome. This was a little embarrassing to the Greeks. When the Confession of Augsburg, translated into Greek for his benefit, was sent to the patriarch, he returned no answer. A second copy was then sent, and eventually the Patriarch Jeremias II was obliged to reply, in a polite but firm statement in which he pointed out where, in Orthodox opinion, the Augsburg Confession was heretical, in particular over its attitude to monastic vows and to icons, to the Sacraments and to justification by faith and to free will, and to the procession of the Holy Ghost (over which the Lutherans followed the Latin error). The Lutherans attempted to argue the points; whereupon Jeremias repeated his objections and wrote back at last asking them not to send more arguments, but only to write letters in the cause of friendship.[1]

Runciman attributed the Patriarch's reluctance to engage in disputation to political embarrassment, but it is difficult to see what was embarrassing to the Eastern Church in being involved in political discussions with the Protestants against their common enemy, the Latin Church. After all, Jeremias ends his third reply with these

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[1] Steven Runciman, "The Greek Church under the Ottoman Turks," *Studies in Church History* 2 (1957): 47.

words: "write no longer concerning dogmas; but if you do [write], write only for friendship's sake."[2] It would seem clear that Jeremias is not embarrassed by potential friendly relations with the Lutherans. Nor does he seem ignorant and unable to engage in disputation. One need only look at his replies to see his (or his amanuensis') command of the literature. Instead, if one understands the Patriarch as acting within the Eastern Church Neoplatonic tradition, then one can more easily understand his reluctance to engage in idle disputation. Jeremias makes that clear in the same "Epilogue" where he writes:

> Therefore, we request that from henceforth you do not cause us more grief, nor write to us on the same subject if you should wish to treat these luminaries and theologians of the Church in a different manner. You honor and exalt them in words, but you reject them in deeds. For you try to prove our weapons which are their holy and divine discourse as unsuitable. And it is with these documents that we should have to write and contradict you. Thus, as for you, please release us from these cares.[3]

If we take his words at face value, then Jeremias is pained by the contentiousness of the Lutherans over theological matters. "Why do they quibble with the Truth?" Jeremias must have asked himself. This was also basically the position of the Moscow Church Council of 1554, which refused to dispute with the German residents of Novyi Gorodok because Orthodoxy was obviously superior.[4] Vasilii Kalika, the bishop of Novgorod (r. 1331–1352), gave a similar response to Magnus IV, King of Sweden (r. 1319–1364), when in 1347 or 1348 the king wanted to hold a council for a debate between Catholic and Orthodox theologians:

> If you want to find out whose faith is better, just, and right, send your people to Constantinople to the Patriarch, because we received the true faith from the Greeks, and we adhere to the laws of the Greek Church, which we received from them; and we do not want to argue with you about the faith … we do not become involved in disputes, arguments, or accusations about the faith and will have no argument with you.[5]

When the Lutheran theologians persist in their efforts to dispute with Jeremias a fourth time, he politely tells them that he has read their rejoinder, that he has

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2 "The Third Answer of Patriarch Jeremiah [II] of Constantinople to Tübingen in the year 1581," in George Mastrantonis, *Augsburg and Constantinople: The Correspondence between the Tübingen Theologians and Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople on the Augsburg Confession* (Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1982), 306.
3 "The Third Answer," 306.
4 *The Nikonian Chronicle*, 5 vols., trans. Serge A. Zenkovsky and Betty Jean Zenkovsky; ed. and annotated by Serge A. Zenkovsky (Princeton: Kingston Press, 1984–1989), 3:159. See also the account of Vasilii's words in *The Chronicle of Novgorod 1016–1471*, trans. Robert Michell and Nevill Forbes (London: Offices of the Society, 1914), 141.
5 *Akty, sobrannye v bibliotekakh i arkhivakh Rossiiskoi imperii Arkheograficheskoi ekspeditsiei imperatorskoi Akademii nauk*, 4 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1836), 1:251–52.

not had time to write his reply, and that he will do so sometime soon. He does not seem, however, to have found the time, for he does not write to them again, not because he and Eastern Church theologians could not engage in disputation, but because they would not. It was pointless from their point of view to split theological hairs. We can see a parallel to Jeremias's refusal to engage in dialectic with the German theologians in Christ's refusal to respond verbally to the Grand Inquisitor in Dostoevskii's *Legend of the Grand Inquisitor*. The Grand Inquisitor represents reason and Christ represents faith, or the Western Church and Eastern Church respectively. For Jeremias, as for the Eastern Church in general, disputation, since it was based on dialectic, could lead only to error. Lanfranc had made a similar criticism of Berengar of Tours: "you desert the sacred authorities and take refuge in dialectic."[6]

Likewise, the seventeenth-century Ukrainian Orthodox polemicist Ivan Vyshens'kyj (ca. 1550–after 1620) called for the total rejection of innovations, including such "pagan tricks ... as grammar, rhetoric, dialectic, and other vainglorious guiles."[7] Subsequently, he refers to "grammatical, dialectical, rhetorical, and philosophical tricks and artifices."[8] He was not so much condemning the guiles and tricks that happened to be grammatical, rhetorical, and dialectical in nature as much as the use of grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic themselves to advance one's views. For Vyshens'kyj, even the trivium was an innovation that distracted one from the true path. The bulk of the historiography has interpreted Vyshens'kyj's views in the context of an Eastern Orthodox spiritual reaction to the Jesuit-led Counter Reformation in Eastern Europe. As a result, according to this line of interpretation, Vyshens'kyj was "unaffected" by the rhetorical devices and thinking of the Counter-Reformation.[9] Instead, I see Vyshens'kyj's views as being a continuation of the Eastern Church's apophatic tradition that began with Iamblichos and Proclos, continued through the writings of Leontios the Hermit, Maximos the Confessor, and John of Damascus, and includes Patriarch Jeremias II. The encroachments of the Counter-Reformation provoked Vyshens'kyj's response just as the enquiries of the Tübingen theologians provoked Jeremias's, but their opposition to their respective provocateurs shows that both well understood the views they were opposing. In this respect, I can agree with the American Slavic philologist Harvey Goldblatt's conclusion that Vyshens'kyj relied on the "formulations linked with the language policies of the post-Tridentine Catholic Church" in opposing those same policies.[10]

If all of truth has already been revealed in the Bible, the Seven Ecumenical Councils, and the writings of the Church Fathers, and we can know it as well through

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6 Lanfranc, *De corpore et sanguine Domini*, in *PL*, 150: col. 416.
7 *Ivan Vyshens'kii. Sochineniia*, ed. I. P. Eremin (Moscow and Leningrad: Akademiia nauk SSSR, 1955), 23.
8 *Ivan Vyshens'kii. Sochineniia*, 123.
9 For a brief survey of the historiographical views, see Harvey Goldblatt, "On the Language Beliefs of Ivan Vyshens'kyj and the Counter-Reformation," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 15 (1991): 7–13.
10 Goldblatt, "On the Language Beliefs of Ivan Vyšens'kyj," 33–34.

our souls by using these writings as a guide, then clearly anything new, any new ideas that are not already contained therein, must, by definition, be wrong and not truthful. Those theologians and philosophers of the Western Church who were imbued with kataphatic concepts in addition to the Bible, Decisions of the Ecumenical Councils, and writings of the Church Fathers also used their perceptions of this world as their sources, and their rationality as guide. The churchmen of the Eastern Church, in contrast, used only the Bible, the Decisions of the Ecumenical Councils, and the writings of the Church Fathers, in particular those heavily influenced by Neoplatonism, as their sources, and the intuition of their souls as guide. In Patriarch Jeremias's correspondence with the Lutherans, for example, it is precisely these Church Fathers he cites most: Basil of Caesarea (329/30–379), Gregory of Nyssa (ca. 335–395), Gregory of Nazianzos, John Chrysostom (ca. 349–407), and Pseudo-Dionysios.

In the Western Church, Abelard juxtaposed 158 contradictory statements in the writings of the Church Fathers, but it created no sensation at the time. Churchmen in both the Western and Eastern Churches were well aware that differences occurred in the statements of the Church Fathers. Abelard listed them in a methodical way the better to recall them in disputations. It was only nineteenth- and twentieth-century historians looking for antecedents to their way of thinking who turned Abelard's juxtapositions into something they were not at the time. Abelard could argue that "a distinction must be drawn between the work of later authors and the supreme canonical authority of the Old and New Testaments," for while one must not question the Scriptures, "if anything seems contrary to truth in the works of later authors … the reader or auditor is free to judge, so that he may approve what is pleasing and disapprove what gives offense, unless it is defended by certain reason [*certa ratione*] or by canonical authority."[11] To do so in the Eastern Church would have been senseless—so-called contradictions in the Divine Writings are only apparent, not real. If a Church Father appears to contradict himself or another Church Father, this is only because the statements are taken out of context. In other words, one's own method of understanding is faulty, not the statements of the Church Fathers. For the Eastern Church, the Bible, the Decisions of the Ecumenical Councils, and the writings of the Church Fathers are the only reliable sources of knowledge, because they are connected with and, along with our own souls, the only means of entry to the Divine Soul. They are not to be questioned or distinctions drawn between them. The question of whether the Eastern Church ranked its authorities was ably answered by Jaroslav Pelikan (1923–2006) in his investigation of this question in the writings of Maximos the Confessor:

> Such, then, was the structure of authority in the theology of Maximus: the teaching "of a council or of a father or of Scripture," but in fact of all three in a dynamic interrelation by which no one of the three could be isolated as

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11 Peter Abelard, *Sic et non: A Critical Edition*, eds. Blanche B. Boyer and Richard McKeon (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976–77), 101.

the sole authority. Scripture was supreme, but only if it was interpreted in a spiritual and orthodox way. The fathers were normative, but only if they were harmonized with one another and related to the Scripture from which they draw. The Councils were decisive, but only as voices of the one apostolic and prophetic and patristic doctrine.[12]

The building blocks, the elements of knowledge, are quotations from, and the works of, the Divine Writings. Jeremias, for example, rebukes the Lutheran theologians for questioning the reliability of these sources, which were the flowers from which the believer, like a bee, gathered sweet nectar. Indeed, one of the most widespread collections of Patristic sayings in Rus' was a Byzantine compilation called *Melissa* (the *Bee*). Or we could think of any written work or compilation as a bouquet in which the sayings were like flowers that could be arranged in different ways. For example, the *troparion* to Nil Sorskii has the following: "Rejecting a worldly life and fleeing from the snares of the world, O confessor and God-bearing, Father Nil, you were most diligent in gathering heavenly flowers from the writings of the Fathers."[13] Practitioners of Neoplatonic epistemology were allowed to rearrange the "flowers" so as to, as we would say, defamiliarize them in order to understand them anew. Many works from early Rus' appear to be merely mosaics of quotations from the Bible and Church Fathers, and the "kaleidoscopic randomization" of the order of the quotations in a written composition, or the order of compositions in a codex, becomes important.[14] If one hears the same things in the same order all the time, diminishing returns sets in. One becomes numbed to their message or function as catalyst. By rearranging them, the reader or listener sees and hears them anew, in a different light, and they again can function as a catalyst to startle the reader or listener into some new internal revelation.[15] Not only does the randomization have aesthetic value, as Veder has suggested, but it also has epistemological value.

For us secular types, with our analytical minds and our concerns for things of this world, where concern for our souls is secondary or non-existent, such views may seem to result only in the mindless repeating of nonsensical formulas—what

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12 Jaroslav Pelikan, " 'Council or Father or Scripture': The Concept of Authority in the Theology of Maximus Confessor," *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 195 (1973): 287.

13 Iustin Polianskii, *Prepodobnyi Nil Sorskii i ego Ustav o zhitel'stve skitskom* (Berlin: Za Tserkov', 1939), 114.

14 The term "kaleidoscopic randomization" to describe the constant rearrangement of works from codex to codex was coined by Veder. William R. Veder, "Literature as Kaleidoscope: The Structure of Slavic *Chetii Sborniki*," in *Semantic Analysis of Literary Texts: To Honour Jan van der Eng on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, ed. Eric de Haard, Thomas Langerak, and Willem G. Weststeinjet (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1990), 599–613. Veder later substituted the term *chaotization* for *randomization* because the latter "still reflects a definite structural principle." Veder, "Old Russia's 'Intellectual Silence' Reconsidered," 26n41. But it is *chaotization* that reflects a structure beyond our understanding, while randomization implies no such structure. Veder compares these works to pre-twelfth-century florilegia in the West.

15 Digital playback devices usually have an option called a "shuffler" that randomly chooses the track to be played. The principle is the same as that of monks rearranging texts randomly in their codices, but the intent, of course, is different.

Thomson called "obscurantism." In the seventeenth century, Samuel Collins remarked that the Russians whom he encountered seemed to be "wholly devoted to their own ignorance."[16] Ignorance it may have been. But for them, it was not ignorance of the Truth, but ignorance of Falsehood from which they sought to isolate themselves. They thought they were already on the path of Truth, just as we think we are on the path of Truth, so we tend to keep ourselves ignorant of the "falsehoods" of Rus' culture. We consider them to be ignorant and obscurantist, and, therefore, wrong, while we consider ourselves to be rational–scientific and enlightened, and, therefore, correct. But Vyshens'kyj, for one, would have viewed us as wrong and ignorant, and seen our souls headed for damnation because we do not hold to the Truth as already revealed in the Divine Writings. Deviation from that truth means trouble and the potential loss of one's soul:

> Is it not better for you to study the *horologian*, *psaltyr*, *ochtoechos*, *apostolos*, *evangelion*, and other books appropriate to the Church and be a simple person pleasing to God and receive eternal life, than to achieve an understanding of Aristotle and Plato and be called a wise philosopher in this life and to depart unto hell? Judge for yourself. It seems to me that it is better not to know even the letter "a" as long as you make your way to Christ.[17]

He has not been proven wrong. We have no way of knowing whether, as a result, his soul has been saved for all eternity in Paradise while our rational–scientific minds have led our souls to eternal damnation.

Here we come to the decision by the Byzantine Church prelates, or perhaps by the Bulgarian monks doing the translations from Greek to Slavonic, of exactly what to pass on to the newly Christianized Rus' in the late tenth and eleventh centuries. What I am about to propose may seem to the reader as somewhat arbitrary speculation, but it is the result of a line of reasoning. We do not have direct evidence of how the Byzantine Church determined which translated texts to send. We can, however, perform a small thought experiment. Let us say we are prelates of the Eastern Church tasked with sending texts to the newly Christianized Rus'. It is doubtful we would choose Homer, Plato, or Aristotle. Instead, liturgical texts as were found in any monastery would be the obvious choices. One can imagine in confronting a virtual pristine intellectual landscape, uncontaminated by worldly literature, the Eastern Church leaders deciding to create a Christian utopia in Rus'. In order to do so, all they needed to do, from their point of view, was to send translated liturgical texts. Thomson pointed out that the translated literature in Rus' was little more than would have been found in a large Byzantine monastery.

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16 Collins, *State of Russia*, 2.
17 Ivan Vyshens'kii, *Sochineniia*, 23–24. Translation of this passage taken from Harvey Goldblatt, "Godlike 'Simplicity' Versus Diabolic 'Craftiness': On the Significance of Ivan Vyshens'kyi's 'Apology for the Slavic Language'," in *Living Record: Essays in Memory of Constantine Bida (1916–1979)*, ed. Irena R. Makaryk (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1991), 3–4.

According to the website of the library of the Monastery of St. John the Theologian on Patmos, which Thomson referenced, that catalogue indicated that in 1201 the library "contained 330 codices … Of this total, 109 had a liturgical content, while 107 may be described as moralizing or hortatory. These, together with the 31 codices of a hagiological nature, represent the corpus of Christian literature in the library. The rest of the manuscripts contained various text of a secular character, and only one had a work by a Classical author: Aristotle's *Categories*." They also coincide well with the texts we find in Rus'.[18] Thus, 247 manuscripts of the 330 (or 74.8 percent) were of a religious nature, which is exactly what we would expect to find.[19] In that respect, early Christian Rus' did not inherit "Byzantine culture" as such; it inherited a subset of that culture—that of a Byzantine monastery. With the exception of Rus' chronicles, subsequent literary compositions in Rus', such as saints' lives, patericons, tales, and so forth, developed with utter logic from that circumscribed base.

The Rus' Church also inherited through Bulgarian monasteries the prevailing epistemological tradition of the Byzantine Church that learning was descriptive ("a continuous and sublime recapitulation") of what was already known, not diagnostic for determining previously unknown truths. In addition, we have no evidence of schools being set up in Rus' to teach the trivium and quadrivium. But, even if such a curriculum existed in Rus', it would have subsumed dialectic to a place as insignificant as the Byzantine Church did. It would not have produced an Abelard to challenge prevailing theological notions with the knife of dialectic. And if it had, he would have been suppressed as an apostle of falsehood and his writings condemned.

In all of Rus', we have evidence for only two works that discuss any part of Aristotelian logic. Both of them are late fifteenth-century translations into East Slavic from the Hebrew, which in turn were translations from the Arabic of parts of the *Intentions of the Philosophers* (*Maqāṣid al-falāsifa*) of al-Gazālī (ca 1058–1111) and the *Logical Terminology* of Maimonides (1135–1204).[20] Both of them are combined into one work—the *Kniga glagolemaia Logika* (*Book Called Logic*). Insofar as the dates of the extant manuscripts are an indication, there does not seem to have been much interest in the *Logika* before the seventeenth century. The Israeli linguist Moshe Taube in his edition lists nine manuscript copies—one from the late sixteenth–early seventeenth century, six from the seventeenth century, and one

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18 About Libraries: Creators and Keepers of Knowledge. A History of Private, Imperial, Court Monastic, and Public Libraries. Monastery of St. John the Theologian on Patmos (accessed 2015), http://aboutlibraries.gr/stage/en/2015-01-21-12-19-33/2015-02-26-14-17-20.html.

19 As Thomson stated, "the bulk of the corpus [of translated works received by early Rus' from Byzantium] is made up of works of a practical, didactic, moral and ascetic nature." Thomson, "Nature of the Reception," 118.

20 For the text, see *The Logika of the Judaizers: A Fifteenth-Century Ruthenian Translation from Hebrew*, trans. and commentary by Moshe Taube (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 2016).

from the seventeenth–eighteenth century. In the fifteenth century, the archbishop of Novgorod, Gennadii (r. 1484–1504), listed it as a reading of the heretics.[21] To what extent Archbishop Gennadii dampened interest in it is difficult to say.[22] Such a singling out could have provoked interest. Or perhaps there was little interest to begin with to be provoked.

Other than those two, we have only an expurgated translation of the *Kefálea filosofiká* (*Philosophical Chapters*), part of John of Damascus's *Font of Knowledge*. Although the work is commonly called *On Dialectic*, it in fact contains no detailed discussion of that subject, at least nothing that anyone could put to any use. We should not, however, condemn Byzantium thereby for negligence in regard to its offspring, the Rus' Church, for Byzantine prelates were providing the provincials (from their point of view) with all they needed to know of what was most important—that is, what they needed to save their souls.

The British art historian Kenneth Clark (1903–1983) articulated a remarkable insight about the abstract decoration of the Irish-style manuscripts from the eighth and ninth centuries, such as the Lindisfarne Gospels and Book of Kells: "We look at them for ten seconds, then we pass on to something else that we can interpret or read. But imagine if one couldn't read and had nothing else to look at for weeks at a time. Then these pages would have an almost hypnotic effect."[23] Some historians have expressed frustration that saints' lives are an unreliable historical source. There are irritating silences in them on crucial questions we would like to have the answers to; they exhibit a predilection for clichés; and they aim less at an accurate biography than at depicting the saint as a model of Christian piety.[24] But such questions, like those of Thomson, are missing the point. For it is this relatively uninteresting material, the "monotonous, repetitious, and stereotyped," which we post-Enlightenment-trained analytical scholars choose to ignore to get on to what, from our point of view, is the "more interesting" material, that is, the real stuff of Rus' culture. It is simply bad form, however, for us to exclaim about the lack

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21 N. A. Kazakova and Ia. S. Lur'e, *Antifeodal'nye ereticheskie dvizheniia na Rusi XIV–nachala XVI veka* (Moscow and Leningrad: Akademiia nauk SSSR, 1955), 320.

22 Goldfrank pointed out the *Book of Logic* instructs one to master and understand the position of one's adversary, but that Iosif Volotskii (and most likely Archbishop Gennadii as well) "would have been scandalized by its [*Book of Logic*'s] underlying goal of acquiring a solid knowledge of the doctrines of the other side." David Goldfrank, "*Adversus Haereticos Novgorodensos*: Iosif Volotskii's Rhetorical Syllogisms," in *Dubitando: Studies in History and Culture in Honor of Donald Ostrowski*, ed. Brian J. Boeck, Russell E. Martin, and Daniel Rowland (Bloomington: Slavica, 2012), 264.

23 Kenneth Clark, *Civilisation: A Personal View* (New York: Harper, 1969), 11.

24 Wallis makes these same criticisms of Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus*. See Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 8. See also V. O. Kliuchevskii, *Drevnerusskie zhitiia sviatykh kak istoricheskii istochnik* (Moscow: K. Soldatenkov, 1871), 402–28. Kliuchevskii did think that the posthumous miracles attached to saints' lives provided evidence about daily life in the monasteries (Kliuchevskii, *Drevnerusskie zhitiia sviatykh*, 438). For a discussion of these points, see Richard Bosley, "A History of the Veneration of SS. Theodosij and Antonij of the Kievan Caves Monastery, from the Eleventh to the Fifteenth Century" (PhD dissertation, Yale University, 1980), 5–8.

of achievements of the brain's mind (διάνοια) in a culture that devoted itself to achievements of the soul's intellect (νοῦς). These fragments, which appear mundane to us, represent ideas so abstract and ineffable that we tend to miss the point, not because we are unable to comprehend them, but because our agenda is different from theirs. The number of *psaltyry*, *evangeliia*, *apostoly*, *oktoikhi*, *chasoslovie*, *chet'i sborniki*, and *zhitiia* copied and still extant, as well as the numerous indigenous icon paintings, testify that Rus' culture was not intellectually silent. Instead, its pitch, for the most part, has been beyond our range of hearing.

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CONCLUSION

My research on this topic began, although I did not realize it at the time, when I was working on my dissertation on the Moscow Church Council of 1503. One of the presumed attendees at the Council was the Russian Hesychastic monk Nil Sorskii. It was important for me to understand the context within which Nil was writing—not just the religious–political context of late fifteenth–early sixteenth-century Muscovy, but the theological context of 1,500 years of Christian intellectual culture. The question I sought to answer was why Eastern Church writers show no interest in analytical reasoning and even an open hostility towards it, while Western Church writers, by the time of the Scholastics, matter-of-factly incorporated analytical reasoning into their defences of the faith. My working hypothesis at the beginning of this study was that we have to look to the third century, when the Roman Empire was splitting into Eastern and Western halves and Christian thinkers were synthesizing Greek idealist philosophy with Christian teachings. In particular, the amalgamation of pagan Neoplatonism with Christian theology occurred in slightly different ways in those areas that came to be dominated by the Western Church and the Eastern Church respectively.

In Western Christendom, Porphyry's *Isagoge* turned out to be the standard introduction to dialectic within the trivium, and it raised the question of whether Aristotelian categories were the same as Platonic forms. In other words, could we know the divine by means of things of this world? Porphyry left the question unanswered. In Eastern Christendom, the *Isagoge* was known but did not have the same impact. And dialectic, as such, does not seem to have been taught in schools of the Byzantine Empire before the thirteenth century, or at least we do not have direct evidence for it. In part, this may be because Porphyry's works were suppressed more systematically (since he was an articulate opponent of Christianity) and, in part, because the views of John of Damascus and others, who dismissed the value of teaching about this world, held sway. The particular synthesis of Neoplatonism with Christianity in the Eastern Roman Empire did not allow an opening for Aristotelian categories or dialectic. In the Western Roman Empire and its successors, there was

such an opening. We see the results of this opening in the works of Alcuin of York, Anselm of Canterbury, and Peter Abelard. Even so, Western Church authorities fought the introduction of dialectic into theological matters, but without success. The result was at first the acceptance of a bifurcated approach—Aristotelian categories and dialectic, this world; Platonic forms and syllogisms, the divine world. And later in Scholasticism the result was the incorporation of dialectic into theology, although in a circumscribed way. Roughly contemporaneous with Abelard in Paris was John Italos in Constantinople, who attempted the introduction of dialectic into theological matters but failed. The groundwork in the Eastern Church had not been laid as it had been in the Western Church by centuries of teaching dialectic.

What this difference helps to explain is the opposition of Gregory Palamas and other Hesychasts to dialectic, as well as the opposition of such seventeenth-century Orthodox writers as Ivan Vyshens'kyj to "pagan tricks" such as grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic while at the same time utilizing those "tricks" in his own writing. I also see the Western European desire for knowledge of this world, the use of mathematics and reasoning to acquire that knowledge, and the entire phenomenon of the Scientific Revolution resulting from the medieval West's revival of the trivium and quadrivium. It is somewhat ironic, then, that when Edward Henry Hall (1831–1912) wrote in 1872 that "theology to become a science must adopt the scientific method,"[1] he probably did not realize that this very method—indeed, the entire Scientific Revolution—had its roots in the very trivium and quadrivium that the Western medieval theologians immersed themselves in. Finally, the difference explains why Hesychastic writers like Nil Sorskii are concerned almost solely with the soul's intellect (νοῦς), that is, as a means for attaining the silent mystical union with God. In contrast, a strong current in Western Church thought allowed for understanding of the mind of God through the human mind (διάνοια). One of the modern-day results is people like Stephen Hawking talking about figuring out the mind of God, which is what Boethius was saying in the sixth century. No one within Eastern Church theological culture would for a moment entertain what from their point of view appears to be a ridiculous notion.

When Rus' converted to Christianity at the end of the tenth century, it received not Byzantine culture as such, but a distilled version of it through the Eastern Church. One can imagine that the Bulgarian monks in charge of sending the new Rus' Church translated literature saw their role to be the salvation of the souls of their new converts. In other words, whoever designated the monks to transmit Christian learning to Rus' made a conscious decision not to send Homer, Plato, or Aristotle. That way, the newly baptized people would not be corrupted with worldly literature, which could only lead them astray. The very works that were the basis for the revival of critical thinking and questioning in the intellectual life of Western

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[1] E[dward] H[enry] Hall, "Theology Considered as a Science," *The Index* (Toledo, OH) 3 (September 21, 1872): 298.

Christendom were simply not introduced into Rus' at that time. That decision was made not to hold back the Rus' but to ensure their spiritual advancement.

Finally, the principle of silence was as well established in the Western Church as in the Eastern. McCulloch has asserted, however, that the "silence" of the Western Church may have been different.[2] In Western monasticism, for example, he saw silence as being "associated with humility and obedience." Valerian (fl. ca. 422–439) stated that speech and silence should remain in balance: "the wise man sets a measure upon them both."[3] Likewise, St. Benedict (480–543 [or 547]) prioritized silence in his Monastic Rule: "Permission to speak should rarely be granted even to perfect disciples, even though it be for good, holy edifying conversation; … it is fitting for a disciple to be silent and to listen."[4] Nil Sorskii represented the love of silence among Eastern Church Hesychasts when he wrote the following advice in his monastic *Ustav*: "Do not put in a word of your own even if you think it a good one."[5] This advice appears in the section of the *Ustav* devoted to "Urge to Pride." For Nil, in addition to silence being a matter of obedience, the very act of shining in conversation with words of one's own was a potential gateway to the sin of pride. One can only imagine what Nil would have thought of Abelard.

I do not wish to make too much of this last point since there were plenty of articulate individuals in the Eastern Church who were not reticent about putting in good words of their own, just as there were staunch practitioners of silence in the Western Church. Florovsky's identification of the concept "criticism" with the concept "culture" and the resultant seeing "[o]nly critical trends" as having "any cultural significance" does seem, though, to be a possibly significant difference between the two *mentalités*. Yet, as we have seen, "intellectual silence" does not necessarily thereby mean intellectual inactivity.

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2 MacCulloch, *Silence*, 92.
3 Francis Thomson, "Quotations of Patristic and Byzantine Works by Early Russian Authors as an Indication of the Cultural Level of Kievan Russia," *Slavica Gandensia* 10 (1983): 65.
4 Benedict of Nursia, *Regula, cum commentariis*, in *PL*, 66: cols. 355–56.
5 *Nila Sorskogo Predanie i ustav*, 58; cf. *NSAW*, 185 and 185n182, where I prefer a rendering closer to that of Goldfrank's alternative translation, which itself is closer to Fedotov's translation. *A Treasury of Russian Spirituality*, ed. and trans. G. P. Fedotov (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1948), 120.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAG	*In Porphyrii Isagogen prooemium in Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*
KGW	*Johannes Kepler Gesammelte Werke*
NS	*New Series*
NSAW	*Nil Sorsky: The Authentic Writings*
PG	*Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Graeco-Latina*
PL	*Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Latina*
RIB	*Russkaia istoricheskaia biblioteka*

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